



Local Emergency Planning Committee

Gem County LEPC
September 20th, 2022
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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| Ricky Bowman, Southwest Dist. Health | Bill Butticci, Gem Co. Commissioners |
| Neal Capps, Gem Co. Road & Bridge | Curt Christensen, Emmett Fire Dist. |
| Quincy Chung, US Forest Service | Shauna Davis, Emmett School Dist. |
| Mike Darling, Emmett Police Dept. | Rob Feeley, Idaho Office of Emergency Management |
| Liz Gochnour, LEPC Secretary | Steve Kunka, Emmett Police Dept. |
| Tahja Jensen, Gem Co. Prosecutor | Troy Lindquist, National Weather Service |
| Natalie Lahti, Idaho Office of Emergency Management | Bev Martin, Gem Co. Sheriff's Posse/
Fire Dist. #2 |
| Joe Mayer, Member of the Public | Mayor Petrie, City of Emmett |
| Len McCaulou, Gem Co. EMS | Margaret Romiti, Valor Health |
| Mark Rekow, Gem Co. Commissioner | Jeff Ulmer, Gem Co. Emergency Mgr. |
| Dave Timony, Gem Co. Sheriff | |
| Barbara Weber, American Red Cross | |

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

Approval of August 16th, 2022 Minutes:

- Motion to approve August 16th, 2022 minutes by Mayor Petrie. 2nd by Dave Timony. Motion passes, minutes approved.

Neal Capps, Director Gem County Road and Bridge: Highway 16 Challenges in Gem County. ITD and Gem County Information and Updates:

- They have had several meetings this past year with Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) regarding Highway 16 looking at options. ITD was approved earlier this year to conduct an environmental study looking at Hwy 16 to Hwy 52. It will look into several things including: cultural, drain beds, water flows, etc. This project will kick off around the middle of October. There will be a shareholders meeting including City and County to help with traffic flows.
- This summer there were three fatalities along Hwy 16 on Freeze Out Hill. On July 19th, Road and Bridge held a meeting with the Commissioners and First Responders to request letters from each department regarding concerns about Hwy 16 with changes that they would like to see drafted to ITD. This is also to help get additional funding for projects.
- They will be having another meeting tomorrow, Sept. 21st with ITD's Development Specialists and Plan Specialists. The meeting is to discuss future needs.
- The Hwy 16 extension project will extend Hwy 16 to the Interstate/Freeway in the next two years. They will be making Hwy 16 from the Freeway to State St. a four lane Hwy and will then work on making Hwy 16 from State St. into Emmett four lanes.

- They have indicated concerns to ITD regarding using Old Freeze Out and JAG Rd. as an evacuation route if there is an accident on Freeze Out Hill.
- ITD has a project slated to start in 2027, depending on funding, to help with the deterioration of Hwy 52 from town to Sweet. The repairs that are listed are: soft spot repair, drainage repair, and a mill & fill (grinding off the top layer and putting down new asphalt).
- Current and Upcoming Projects: Last summer, ITD had to do an emergency culvert replacement along Hwy 52 and Cascade Rd. and then had to come back and try and to facilitate another culvert replacement issue. They are also working on adding a center turn lane at Bowman and Hwy 52. One of their big projects is putting in a stop light at Mill Rd. and Hwy 52 due to the increased traffic around the Highschool. They are looking at taking out the yellow flashing lights at Idaho and Hwy 52 near B&W Fuels and replacing them with LED Stop signs on East and West Idaho and caution signs. Traffic will sometimes stop on the Hwy anticipating the light to turn red.
- Please submit letters with your concerns and ideas for safety improvements to the County Commissioners, who plan to send the letters to the Legislature and IDT.

LEPC By-Laws Introduction for Review:

- Please review the proposed new by-laws for a vote during the next LEPC meeting on October 18th, 2022.

Public Comments:

- **Chief Kunka:** Joe and I had a discussion regarding his concerns about Idaho Power and the substation. He was directed to speak privately with those individuals for his questions rather than asking them during the LEPC meeting.
- **Joe Mayer:** Idaho Power stated that they had sent an email in May stating that the issues he would like addressed are so important that they cannot discuss them due to the risk of safety of Idaho Power employees.
- **Curt Christensen:** It seems that Idaho Power is taking very seriously physical security threats to their infrastructure and that they are able to keep the power on 99.9% of the time. I have to trust that Idaho Power has done a risk analysis of their own infrastructure due to keeping the power on for all of Idaho. If you would like to go further with it, you should address Idaho Power directly.

General Reports:

- **Quincy Chung, US Forest Service:** Fire season is wrapping up across the West with a possibility of additional activity in Northern California. The Washington office has raised the 90-day moratorium on prescribed burns with some new requirements. On October 8th, staff working forestry services will be placed into the non-paid status or moved to prescribed fires. Precipitation is in the forecast, which should put a hurt on the Four Corners fire. Hunter season fires are anticipated, fires started by hunters not putting their fire out completely due to the lower temperatures. Please spread the word to put their fires out completely.
- **Rob Feeley, Idaho Office of Emergency Management:** IOEM is not a fire response agency, but they can support agencies that are part of Unified Command. Due to the threat to the community and structures from the Four Corners Fire and Ross Fork Fire, IOEM was able to request and approve a Fire Management Assistance Grant from FEMA. IOEM will be hosting a Preparedness conference on October 11th – 13th in Boise. They are making an effort to get back into training and exercise support. Reach out to Rob to get more information.

- **Bill Butticci, Gem County Commissioners:** The River Through Time event has been canceled this year. Thanks to Jeff Ulmer and the Sheriff's office for keeping us informed about the Four Corners Fire. The building next to the Prosecutors office has been taken down. A building close to the Court House has been purchased for expansion in the next few years. The first Opioid meeting will be coming up on Monday, Sept. 26th to discuss how to utilize the funds. Gem County received \$20,000 with more to come from a 20-year pay-out period. They are also reviewing security and evacuation plans.
- **Jeff Ulmer, Gem County Emergency Manager:** Please look over the proposed by-laws for approval at the next LEPC meeting. He has also been updating the Emergency Management pages on the Gem County website. There are some preparedness topics for September. All the LEPC agendas, minutes, and upcoming meeting dates are listed.
- **Neal Capps, Gem County Road and Bridge:** Changes are coming to the Road Department in the fall. There will be a road closure around the Don's Meats bridge in late November for two to three months.
- **Len McCaulou, Gem County EMS:** EMS is still running status quo with their run volume. They are covering five events this month along with their call runs.
- **Ricky Bowman, Southwest District Health:** They are re-vamping their Continuity of Operations Plan. They are trying to get back to business as usual.
- **Mayor Petrie, City of Emmett:** They are having a meeting this afternoon with the County about the Comprehensive plan. They would like to have a final plan by the end of the month.
- **Chief Kunka, Emmett City Police:** CREASE ALERRT training for community members has been presented to a number of people including a Day Care and the administrators of the school district, who will be presenting it to their teachers. Homecoming is this Friday. They will be assisting with the traffic during the parade.
- **Chief Christensen, Emmett City Fire:** They are able to help with the Dream Flight on September 1st. The City and Fire produced a Color Guard on September 11th. They were able to replace a few car seats from the car accident on Freeze Out Hill. They will be helping the High School at their bon-fire on Sept. 28th. City Fire received \$3500 and Gem County Fire District #1 received \$3500 from purchases of the Fire Department license plate that will be going toward their training facility. In July, 2017 there was a fast-moving fire in Lincoln Co. A company filed a lawsuit due to damages above \$1 million. The Idaho Fire Chiefs are filing an AMICUS brief supporting the actions of those agencies in Lincoln Co.
- **Margaret Romiti, Valor Health:** Valor Health is moving into the recovery phase of COVID with an after-action plan being completed. They will continue monitoring the spread and will keep the mask mandate in place.
- **Barbara Weber, American Red Cross:** They are working on training and preparedness for all age groups with a focus on Fire preparedness and prevention in September and October. In the fall and winter there is an increase in single family fires. They offer services and assistance to those victims of home fires.
- **Troy Lindquist, National Weather Service:** They have been in communication with the BARE (burn area response team) on the Four Corners Fire. Overall, there was approx. a 2% high severity burn, 34% moderate, and 63% low severity to the area. We should see some rain on Wednesday and Thursday in Gem County.
- **Bev Martin, Gem County Fire Dist. #2:** They are back to business as normal, but have already had one small hunter fire reported.

Motion to adjourn by Mayor Petrie. 2nd by Dave Timony. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 am.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 18th at 8:30 a.m. Direction will be provided at a later date on whether the meeting will be in person or remote.