



Gem County LEPC
February 20th 2024
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:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Rick Applegate, American Red Cross | Ricky Bowman, Southwest Dist. Health |
| Commissioner Bill Butticci, Gem Co. | Chief Curt Christensen, Emmett Fire |
| Quincy Chung, US Forest Service | Mike Giery, Emmett Fire Dist. |
| Liz Gochnour, LEPC Secretary | Tahja Jensen, Gem Co. Prosecutor |
| Chief Steve Kunka, Emmett Police | Bev Martin, Gem Co. Fire #2 |
| Joe Mayer, Member of the Public | & Ola Community |
| Dep. Chief Len McCaulou, Gem | Renee McDaniel, Valor Health |
| Co. EMS | Heidi Novich, Idaho Office of |
| Mayor Gordon Petrie, City of Emmett | Emergency Management |
| Commissioner Mark Rekow, Gem Co. | Margaret Romiti, Valor Health |
| Jeff Ulmer, Gem Co. Emergency Mgr. | Barbara Weber, American Red Cross |
| Chief Mike Welch, Gem Co. Fire | Commissioner Kirk Wille, Gem Co. |
| Sheriff Donnie Wunder, Gem Co. | |

Meeting called to order by Chief Christensen at 8:30am.

Public Comments (3 Minutes):

- Joe Mayer: Joe now has posters and stands for his hazard information signs. Contact Joe for signs and more information.
- Commissioner Butticci: Youth Appreciation Day will be on April 27th from 11 am – 3pm at the Gem Island Sports Complex. Let Commissioner Butticci know if you are a First Responder and will not be able to attend. Barbara Weber: What is the event? Commissioner Butticci: YAD is a yearly event held at the end of April. It is a free event put on by volunteers to appreciate the youth in the town. Rotary provides lunch and the agencies have fun activities or games. Barbara Weber: The Red Cross has an Emergency Response Vehicle. Quincy Chung: We could have a discussion to see if Smokey the Bear is available.

Approval of January 16th, 2023 Minutes (3 Minutes):

- Motion to approve by Mayor Petrie. 2nd by Barbara Weber. Motion passes.

School District Radio Communication: Bob Hyde, Assistant Superintendent Emmett School District (20 Minutes):

- Jeff Ulmer: Bob Hyde is at the Capital Building this morning and is unable to attend this meeting. We will get more information when the School District can attend this meeting.
- The School District is applying for a grant of about \$200,000 to connect radio communication from the school district to local Emergency Responders. Each school would have their own channel to communicate. They would not be able to hear agency communications on other channels. This is to have better response and information in emergency situations within the school district.

Discussion about Volunteer Responder Vehicles (20 Minutes)

- Idaho Codes: Chapter 1 49-123, Chapter 6 49-623, Chapter 9 49-910A, Chapter 9 49-928
- Chief Christensen & Chief Kunka: Last week one of the volunteer responders was pulled over responding to a call due to their blinking light on their vehicle and there was additional confusion about the officer leading the responder to the call.
- How do we let members of the public know that when they see flashing lights on a regular car, it is a volunteer responding to an emergency call? People moving into a small town may not know that up to 70% of the responders are volunteers.
- After Tahja reviews the information, we will put out a press release and posts to social media.
- Mayor Petrie: This would be a good opportunity to have a table at Youth Appreciation Day.
- Chief Kunka: The police officer did not know that the volunteer was responding to an EMS call. Police and EMS are on a different radio frequency. The School District is working on a grant to connect the two agencies for better communication.
- Chief Christensen: This also lends itself to have discussions with all the agency first responders. What does that look like for all our agencies? How do we both set up an SOP (Standard Operating Procedure), SOG (Standard Operating Guidelines) to follow? How do we all respond?
- Every responder has different types of lights added to their vehicles. They have lights, but no sirens. Mayor Petrie: Would it be possible to get a common unit for all volunteer responders? Dep. Chief McCaulou: We do not provide lights; our volunteers provide their own. The lights that provide 360-degree coverage are \$300 - \$400. The code states that they can break the speed limit, but must drive with due regard. If they go beyond what the law states they are taking that risk so we follow what the code states.
- Tahja Jensen: In terms of providing lights or writing and SOP how are they being covered by the law? Your insurance is not covering them if they were in an accident so you should probably recommend lights, but I would not provide lights for them.
- Chief Mike Welch: Gem Co. Fire/EMS already has a pretty strict SOP with specific guidelines.
- Tahja: It would be helpful to share that with law enforcement so that they know what to expect with volunteers responding to calls.
- Chief Kunka: If the officer would have known there was an EMS call, he would not have stopped the vehicle unless they were responding in an unsafe way.
- Mayor Petrie: My recommendation would be to contact our District 14 Legislators and have a special license plate made for volunteers. Once they are a member of the organization, they would qualify for the license plate and that is the vehicle they should be in when responding to a call.

General Reports (10 Minutes):

- **Jeff Ulmer, Gem Co. Emergency Manager:** Jeff has been working on the community wide protection plan. They will be meeting with The Idaho Department of Lands tomorrow. There was an Ola Community Meeting with the Forest Service. They are also working on the All-Hazard Mitigation Plan update.
- **Chief Mike Welch, Gem Co. Fire Dist. #1:** They had 12 students finish their Firefighter 1 class with about 160 hours completed. There will be an extrication class in March and wildland training will be in April.
- **Chief Steve Kunka, City of Emmett Police:** They were able to locate possible suspects of false reporting related to the bomb threat on the 13th. There were no bombs placed in any of the schools. Those reports will be forwarded to the prosecutor for possible charges for the suspects.

- **Mayor Petrie, City of Emmett:** There will be a ceremony for Cpt. Moulton on Thursday upon his remains returning to Emmett. The ceremony will be held in front of the Court House with different agency participation.
- **Chief Len McCaulou, Gem Co. EMS:** Gem Co. EMS had 202 calls for service last month, being the 3rd month in a row with calls being over 200. Approx. 40-50 of those included 1 if not 2 volunteer crews responding in their personal vehicles.
- **Margaret Romiti, Valor Health:** Valor Health will be doing a utility failure tabletop and drill. Last month they received a grant for a pediatric trauma simulation which included EMS participation. They also received a grant for sexual assault to train and certify 5 Nurses on evidence collection, Social Worker training and to get equipment needed.
- **Heidi Novich, Idaho Office of Emergency Management:** It is Tier 2 reporting time which is when the private sector reports through the EPA about bad chemicals they have within their facility and that goes out to the State. Usually someone within the LEPC group then gets that information. They are trying to work with the private sector to report any amount of hazardous chemicals they have. Their Hazmat Program Manager has been trying to get out to local areas to talk about basic hazmat training and how the State Communication process works. Please contact IOEM if you would like them to come and do that training or provide information. They are not anticipating any major flooding to any publicly owned infrastructure.
- **Barbara Weber, American Red Cross:** They appreciate knowing about the public events so that they can provide their Emergency Response Vehicle and provide information about their prevention programs. Their youth presentations are interactive ones. They also appreciate their partnership with the Fire Department to install and replace smoke alarms.
- **Quincy Chung, US Forest Service:** They have an Engine coming to town on March 4th for the Touch a Truck event. They will be having community forum meetings on March 12th at 4:30pm in Garden Valley and on March 13th at 4:30pm in Emmett.
- **Commissioners, Gem County:** Work was done on High Valley Rd. to close and rebuild due to weather and commuter traffic. Hwy 16 discussions continue with presentations from ITD and a letter was submitted. A culvert at Hwy 16 and Johns failed and repairs are being done and they are shifting funding to finish the work. They are looking at increasing parking for the Rodeo that has now gone pro, not amateur by turning the RV park into additional parking.
- **Ricky Bowman, Southwest District Health:** There will be a webinar on March 7th regarding their update to their communication plan.
- **Bev Matin, Gem Co. Fire Dist. #2/Ola Community:** This winter they have focused on training for structure fires and will be shifting over to training for wildland fires.
- **Sheriff Donnie Wunder, Gem Co. Sheriff:** The Sheriff's department will be involved in the ceremony on Thursday for Cpt. Moulton. The plane with his remains is expected to land at the Boise airport at 3:00pm and it is asked that the community dress in red, white, and blue and line up along Washington and Main St. as they come through to the Court House.
- **Chief Curt Christensen, City of Emmett Fire:** They had 3 new hires which brings staff total to 24, which is double the staff from 9 years ago. They responded to a structure fire which started in the kitchen and were able to save the structure. The fire was reported by a neighbor that had spotted the smoke. Community outreach will include Dr. Seuss's Birthday at the Library, Touch a Truck at the Business Expo and Youth Appreciation Day. Each event will have a prevention theme. Chief Christensen will be doing a 90-minute presentation about retention and recruitment for the Idaho Fire Chiefs Association and also reviewing House Bill 506 regarding rental properties and safety regulations.

Motion to adjourn by Mayor Petrie. 2nd by Commissioner Wille. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 18th, 2024 @ 8:30 a.m.