

## Emergency Management Study Group

### Minutes for the April 16 meeting

#### Members in attendance:

Bonnie Chase  
Carol Reller  
Ed Reller  
Priscilla Sawa

#### Also present:

Clarence "Buster" Meyer (Alstead Emergency Management Director)  
Chris Hansen (Alstead Advisory Budget Committee Chair)

#### Topics discussed:

- Buster explained that Homeland Security (HS) requires every town to have an Emergency Management Director (EMD). Because of the training required and the workload, he has recommended to the NH Emergency Management field rep. for Cheshire County (Liz Lufkin), that a Cheshire County EMD position be created and salaried. In Buster's opinion:
  - Extensive training is now required for the EMD position. (Level 7 training, which Buster has, requires at least 100 hours, and new training requirements are added every year.) This alone makes a volunteer position unreasonable.
  - In addition, HS wants the EMD to coordinate with the town Police Department and Fire Department as well as neighboring towns.
  - Buster worked over 90 hours on the July storm in 2011. He doesn't try to keep track of hours he spends at meetings or training.
  - The suggested wage for EMDs is \$23 per hour (\$46K per year plus benefits), making it unlikely that a town such as Alstead could fund an EMD position. Some towns like Marlow and Langdon have no EMD because no one volunteers.
- Following the inadequate preparation for 9/11 and Katrina, Homeland Security has created an impressive set of standards that apply equally to all municipalities, including small towns such as Alstead and large ones like New York City. This has resulted in a more organized response to disasters such as hurricanes or tornadoes, but also creates a lot of red tape. For example, people who do the repairs after a disaster have to be "certified".
- In the case of the 2005 flood, Alstead received adequate support from FEMA. However, for the two storms in 2011, the town received \$105K for \$1M worth of damage. The reason may be that the federal focus in 2011 was the Colorado disaster.

- In addition to the training and collaboration work, the EMD plans and prepares a disaster response.
  - Every five years the town must update its Emergency Operations Plan for a cost of \$5K. We hire an expert (Southwest Community Services) to help us through this process. Homeland Security will reimburse the town for the \$2.5K paid to SWCS if we raise matching funds.
  - Without an updated EOP, we are not eligible for FEMA/HS funds.
  - Alstead has to store enough MREs to support the town for three days.
  - The EMD operates the town sat phone (\$522 in annual fees).
- Greater Monadnock Medical Reserve Corps (gmmtc.org) is a team of thousands of volunteers that responds to disasters.
- We discussed Carol's draft of the report containing our recommendations regarding the PD.
  - We agreed the scope and the flow of the report is about right. We agreed to postpone a line-by-line review to the next meeting.
  - We agreed to add a statement to the report that we are opposed to the idea of body cameras for our police officers but are open to the idea of cameras on the police cruisers.
  - We agreed to add appendices to the report with the call statistics, demographic data, and the list of contacts for the various New England states Police Chiefs Associations.
  - We agreed to add a note to the report about the call statistics saying that we need better data in order to create a long-term plan. The call statistics alone don't give us clear insight into whether we are adequately staffed.
  - Chris H. recommended that the candidates for police chief be asked how to collect better data on police work.
- We agreed to take up Emergency Management and the EMD position in particular as the next focus of this committee.

#### Motions:

- The meeting minutes of April 2 were approved.
- Ed moved that we accept the job description of the police chief as is. Bonnie seconded and all 4 voted in favor.

#### Action items:

- Carol will work on a second draft of the report.
- Ed will get back to Buster about where to get MREs.

#### Next meeting:

April 23 at 7:00 pm at the Town Offices.

#### Agenda items for next meeting:

- Approve the report and decide how to present it to the SB