

MINUTES  
HARVEY COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (LEPC)  
EOC Meeting Room (Basement of LEC)  
120 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Newton, Kansas 67114  
June 14th 2023, 2023 @ 9:00 am

Present: Larry Alexander, Gloria Arellano, Russ Buller, Skip Cowan, Jamie Dehler, Bryan Ellis, Kyle Fiedler, Lynnette Redington, Steve Roberson, Jason Thompson, Daniel Galley, Randy Hauge, Daniel Keane, Lona Kelly, Colton Kester, Michelle Lowery, Erika Lozano, Kyle McCaskey, Diana Waddell-Gilbert, Tara Kitzke, Paul Bogner.

Larry Alexander called the meeting to order at 9:01am and introductions of all attendees were brought forth.

**1. Opening of Meeting:**

Mr. Alexander then asked for a motion to approve the June 12th, 2023 agenda. Bryan Ellis advised that most of the agenda changed since there were a few people unable to attend the meeting. Scott Roberts had to cancel, therefore the presentation he had prepared would not be given, as well as Mike Anderson who was to deliver this month's exercise scenario was handling a Hazmat situation and unavailable.

Mr. Ellis advised he would be doing the scenario presentation and Skip Cowan would step in to give a presentation on "Fall Out Shelters".

Mr. Alexander then asked for a motion to approve the changes in the agenda.

Skip Cowan made the motion to approve which was seconded by Diana Waddell-Gilbert.  
**Agenda approved.**

Mr. Alexander then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 12<sup>th</sup> 2023 meeting. Tara Kitzke made the motion to approve which was seconded by Lona Kelly. **Minutes approved.**

**2. Old Business**

- At this meeting Mr. Alexander noted that there was no old business mentioned on the agenda and asked if anyone might have something they would like to discuss. With silence, Mr. Alexander moved on to the category of new business.

**3. New Business:**

- **Meeting Dates and Times** – Bryan Ellis brought to the table the idea of changing meeting times to a new day of the week. He advised that Wednesday's seem to be difficult for most and that if anyone had any suggestions to a better day, time or week he would be open to discuss that and we could bring it up at another meeting to vote on. He also advised those in attendance that we are currently setting up tour dates with organizations for these meetings so

if anyone had a place that would like to tour, or if a facility would like to host a meeting, then to please let him know by email and he would try and get those dates and times set up as well. Larry Alexander then advised he would like to table the conversations on moving the dates and time until both Mike Anderson and Brody Flavin are available to discuss it with the group as well.

- **Presentation** – Skip Cowan gave a presentation on the “Fallout Shelters” in Harvey County. Mr. Cowan advised that due to recent paperwork he has been doing lately, and an article he discovered, that fallout shelters were mainly used during the cold war, the presentation showed the different locations for these shelters at the time of the articles report. However, most of those on the list are not, he believes, to be operational anymore, but it would be something to definitely look into. His biggest take away from the research is even those that were on this list and in fact functional more than likely would not be available to citizens after business hours. Bryan Ellis injected that this would be why Emergency Management does not list the fallout shelters, or any type of shelters in general, as a post on the counties website because we cannot guarantee their openings. Mr. Cowan then advised that while he has been researching he has found that out of the 21 on the list only 16 could confirm that they would continue to be used as a shelter. He also advised that Gary Denny while he was the Emergency Management Director, did in fact write a grant that allowed for a shelter trailer and that can be used by 12 counties here in Kansas that joined together and then he explained all of the equipment that would be available if the trailer were to be requested. Mr. Cowan then mentioned that this specific shelter trailer has only been used 2 times in this career here with Harvey County and that neither time did it need to be utilized overnight for victims. Bryan Ellis then mentioned at the close of Mr. Cowan’s presentation that even thought our plans says, “shelter” in our plans, there are several different types of “shelters”. They range from the typical shelters where individuals can sleep, shower, stay, eat and all the way down to shelters opened during the elements, such as warming centers or cooling centers too. These would work well with these shelters listed in the article because, for example, a shelter that closes at business hours can still be the original place for sheltering, but these temporary ones can be put into place for the afterhours. Larry Alexander then posed the question, “Just to verify what Skip was saying doing his presentation, Out of all of the shelters on the list, only 5 or so didn’t reply or responds to his calls for shelter verification?” Mr. Cowan explained which ones he had not heard back from and as to why he felt they had not been in contact, either wrong emails, no longer in business, or just not anyone in the building during normal hours like a church for example or school during summer hours.
- **Exercise** – Bryan Ellis then gave the scenario exercise. A utility contractor working on a water main near a long term care facility, has hit a gas pipe line with their backhoe. There was no explosion but gas is leaking into the air. How do we evacuate, do we evacuate or do you shelter in place? What are your mitigation plans in this case? Steve Roberson asked the question to Mr. Ellis, “Is this natural gas?” Which Mr. Ellis advised, “It could be. Does that change how you move forward?”

- Colton Kester advised that at their facility they have many patients who are on oxygen so their concern of course is going to be the air quality. Trying to get 90-100 people out and off of campus would be difficult at best and they would need help with transportation so if it all possible they would just shelter in place. He added that hopefully by then Lona Kelly would be notified of the situation and she would be able to help get transportation set up. Mrs. Kelly advised that would definitely be her first priority yes. Russ Buller asked if Mr. Kester's facility might have plans in place with neighboring long term care facilities to help with taking in their patients or even transporting them. Mr. Kester advised that they do have some agreements, but of course they are looking at transportation of vans, bigger transport buses and those are not always easy to come by, which is why a shelter in place order might be easier if there is no signs of imminent threat to his patients.
- Bryan Ellis then asked the question, "What does a shelter in place order look like for those who would need to do that?" Mr. Kester advised they would shut down air intakes, wait for authorities to let them know if they need to tape up doors and windows. Clear patients out of rooms that might have windows or near doors that would be dangerous if the station changed to an explosion or something.
- Jason Thompson then advised that at this point a decision would need to be made with conversations to the long term care facilities in that area. Law Enforcement would start working on traffic control, if there is an evacuation what egress areas would they need to keep clear for those transportation vehicles. He even suggested this might be a point where road and bridge is called in for traffic barriers to help out and set up a staging area safely away for the scene for media.
- Kyle McCaskey then added that for his department of social media and PIO he would begin setting up routine meetings for release of statements to both news agency's as well as social media. Bryan Ellis advised the group that Kyle has worked hard to create a PIO group here in Harvey County that is strong enough to jump in and assist him in this task that they come from both city media partners as well as local ones. Those relationships lead to the availability of having someone say from the school district step in and help facilitate the conversations with the media. Larry Alexander then brought to the groups attention how the media was a big hurdle that his team with the CCRT had to handle during the recent Fox Meadows Apartment Fire. He admitted it was not something his team had prepared for and was rather a big eye opener for them and felt this was a great discussion.

At this point Mr. Alexander asked if there were any miscellaneous items that needed to be addressed.

**Miscellaneous** – Lynette Redington informed the meeting attendees that there is a mental health first aid course that will be coming available soon. She would be sending out emails in the next few days about both an Adult and Kids mental health class.

Larry Alexander let everyone know about a fast pitch softball Mexican/American event that would be the upcoming weekend and it was expected to be a very large event. There will also be a "Cars in the Park" as well.

Mr. Alexander then asked if there were any motions to adjourn this meeting. Skip Cowen made the motion which was seconded by Lona Kelly. **Meeting adjourned at 9:56am**

**Next Meeting August 9th at 9:00am**

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