

MINUTES
HARVEY COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (LEPC)
EOC Meeting Room (Basement of LEC)
120 E. 7th Street
Newton, Kansas 67114
April, 12th 2023, 2023 @ 9:00 am

Present: Larry Alexander, Mike Anderson, Justin Bland, Skip Cowan, Jamie Dehler, Craig Dunlavy, Bryan Ellis, Brody Flavin, Randy Hague, Lona Kelly, Colton Kester, Brian Palmer, Molly Redinger, Becky Reimer, Anthony Swartzendruber, Ricardo Torres.

Brody Flavin called the meeting to order at 9:02am and introductions of all attendees was brought forth.

1. Opening of Meeting:

Mr. Flavin then asked for a motion to approve the April 12th, 2023 agenda, Chief Craig Dunlavy made the motion which was seconded by Brian Palmer. **Agenda approved.**

Mr. Flavin then requested a motion to approve the minutes from the February 8th, 2023 meeting. Brian Palmer made the motion which was seconded by Skip Cowen. **Minutes approved.**

2. Old Business

• **2023 Meeting Dates:**

April 12th 2023

June 14th 2023

August 9th 2023

October 11th 2023

December 13th 2023

- **Vice Chair Position:** Brody Flavin opened up the meeting by asking if there had been anymore consideration for a person to fill the Vice Chair position, it was discussed to move this topic to the next meeting. However, Larry Alexander advised he did not want this position to remain vacant so he then placed his name up for consideration. Skip Cowen then made a motion for Larry Alexander to be given the position of Vice Chair for the LEPC group, Randy Hague seconded the motion. **Larry Alexander will take the position of Vice Chair immediately.**

3. New Business:

- **Industry Spotlight:** Ricardo Torres with Southern Star Pipeline shared a presentation with the group about the company and what pipelines they have in the area. Southern Star is 5800 miles of natural gas pipelines which runs through not only Kansas, but Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. They maintain 42 compressor stations with one of them being located in Harvey County in Hesston. That location has 8 natural gas storage containers

in the field and they are regulated by PHMSA and DOT. Mr. Torres shared the dangers of a pipeline explosion by citing the recent ones in San Bruno, California back in 2010 that occurred in a 30 in pipeline and killed 8 individuals. He also spoke about the 2014 explosion in Texas that killed 1 individual and injured 8 others. Mr. Torres then gave the group ways in which they can recognize possible gas leaks and how to help in getting things taken care of safely, they are as follows:

- **Sight** – vapors will actually leave a frosting on the ground, you will see dirt moving or has been moved, vegetation around the area will have died off.
- **Sound** – there can be a “hissing” sound or even a “loud roar”.
- **Smell** – even though most gas will be odorless and tasteless, Southern Star adds in an odorant which at times can be detected.

Mr. Torres went on to explain that if any of these things are experienced to please call

- 9-1-1
- 1-800-324-9696

If there is a situation Mr. Torres shared with the group the companies’ ideal way of handling the situation which would be:

- Secure the Area
- Removed any ignition points around the area (debris, grass, flammable objects)
- Establish a Command Center
- Notify Southern Star Pipeline
- Evacuate anyone in the area who is not vital to the response.
- Do not attempt to operate the pipelines, please allow Southern Star’s Response Team to handle that, even if it currently burning.

Any other information can be gathered by vising their website at:

www.southernstar.com/safety

www.npws.phmsa.dot.gov

At the end of Mr. Torres presentation Randy Hague asked if there was a situation in Hesston recently because he had heard something that sounded like a jet engine. Mr. Torres advised that it was in fact Southern Star Pipeline, doing a “burn off” which they would be conducting again soon in that area.

- **Exercise:** This month’s exercise was given by Emergency Management Director Mike Anderson who shared a video of the Navy’s Blue Angel Squad and how they have a risk management briefing after they complete a practice session or air show. This showed where the team goes over not only what went wrong, but what went right. Areas in which they can approve and that at times the debriefing is longer then a scheduled practice time. After the presentation the floor was opened up for comments or questions. Larry Alexander

commented he liked the way the team were able to give criticism and accept it with no hang ups on rank or position. It was an open dialogue with everyone's opinion being heard. Randy Hague agreed and that he liked the way the gentleman took responsibility for their decisions, be them right or wrong and were open to critics as well. Brian Palmer added that he liked the way it was geared toward the focus of a solution at the end and not continued criticism. They worked as a team to fix the issue and stay commented to the end goal of a safe airshow.

Mike Anderson then addressed the group and asked, if any of them had the luxury of knowing what their work script would look like in a day. Unlike the Blue Angels who clearly have a game plan each time they take to the skies, the group within the LEPC do not have that luxury. They never know what the next call, the next emergency, the next briefing is going to take. So when the day gets to be so out of control, they are already a league above an organization like the Blue Angel's because they are able to bring the coordination to the chaos. This is the purpose of the LEPC meetings, to bring all of the key players together to handle a "debriefing" and try to prepare for the next "show". Larry Alexander spoke up and said he had this moment recently with the fire at 21st and Rock. It was hard because they didn't know what to expect, they had to embrace the chaos and work through it. He agreed that this is time we need to be learning what to do from this unique group of people so when it does all go sideways you know who to call and how to get it done. You have a face with a name and number. This type of thing will always be "learned" because it can never be controlled."

- **Membership Update** – Brody Flavin then gave the membership update where he asked Bryan Ellis, Assistant Director of Emergency Management to explain the numbers. Mr. Ellis advised that there is a new excel spreadsheet for signing in to the meetings at the back of the room. When everyone has a chance to please make sure to sign it and if an organization knows of any updates that need to be addressed to please write those in on the notes area so we can get that information changed and keep everything updated as we go into the rest of the year.

At this point Mr. Flavin asked if there were any miscellaneous items that needed to be addressed. Molly Redinger Assistant Director of Communications mentioned the upcoming Harvey County Safety Fair and gave the date, time and location. She also mentioned the "Touch a Truck" as well as static displays that would be in attendance.

Brody Flavin then asked if there were any motions to adjourn this meeting. Skip Cowen made the motions which was seconded by Chief Craig Dunlavy. **Meeting adjourned at 9:42am**

Next Meeting June 14th at 9:00am

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