



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Rutland Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC)

Meeting Minutes for
Wednesday, December 11, 2024 – 5:30 pm
Microsoft Teams

I. **Voting Member Roll Call**

Vice Chair Jan Sotirakis convened the meeting at 5:30 PM. Maggie O'Brien conducted the voting member roll call. A quorum of voting members was present.

II. **Approve Meeting Agenda**

Michael Jones made the motion to approve the December 11, 2024 Agenda. Motion seconded by Peter Mantello. No further discussion. Motion approved.

III. **Approve September 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Mantello made the motion to approve the September 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Motion seconded by Jones. No further discussion. Motion approved.

IV. **Open to the Public**

There was no one from the public in attendance.

V. **REMC Representative Reports**

- a. Statewide Local Emergency Planning Commission (**LEPC**) Rep, Bob Morlino
 - i. Morlino was absent, so O'Brien provided the report on his behalf. LEPC held their last meeting on October 22. Glen Wallace from EPA Region I presented on the requirements and obligations imposed by the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). The next LEPC meeting is January 14.
- b. Threat Hazard Identification & Assessment/Stakeholders Preparedness Report (**THIRA/SPR**) Rep
 - i. This position is currently vacant, so nothing to report.
- c. Integrated Planning and Preparedness Workshop (**IPPW**) Rep, Tom Johnston
 - i. Johnston stated he had nothing new to report.

VI. **REMC Organizational Tasks**

- a. Appointments
 - i. Chair: Vice Chair Sotirakis entertained a nomination for Chair. Jones volunteered to accept the nomination. Mantello made the motion to elect Jones as Chair. Motion seconded by Jack Perry. No further discussion. Motion approved.
 - ii. Vice Chair: Jones made the motion to re-elect Sotirakis as Vice Chair. Motion seconded by Jim Bagnall. No further discussion. Motion approved.

- iii. THIRA/SPR Rep: Jones made the motion to elect Mantello as the THIRA/SPR Rep. Motion seconded by Bagnall. No further discussion. Motion approved.
- iv. IPPW Rep: Bagnall made the motion to re-elect Johnston as the IPPW Rep. Motion seconded by Perry. No further discussion. Motion approved.
- v. LEPC Rep: The term for this position is three years, so Morlino will continue to serve until December 2025.

VII. **Announcements**

- a. Southern Recovery Region Model – FEMA: O’Brien briefed the Committee about ongoing efforts to establish regional “recovery networks” in Southern Vermont. The goal of these networks is to create a holistic approach to communication, collaboration, and advocacy for recovery efforts. Rutland is currently part of a trial run where sub-region boundaries are community based, and this is being realized by the emergence of the Region’s Community Organizations Active in Disaster (**COAD**); see below for more information.
- b. Coordination with Rutland Regional Disaster Cooperative: The Rutland Regional Disaster Cooperative (**RRDC**) is envisioned as the framework through which regional disaster management is organized for Rutland County. The overarching goal of the RRDC is to gather key partners (municipalities, non-profits, faith-based and community organizations, and businesses) in the Region together to build relationships start establishing regional support networks. O’Brien is working with a smaller sub-committee to achieve one of RRDC’s desired outcomes, that is “Towns know what the RRDC is, communicate their needs for the COAD, and build support for a partnership with the REMC.” She anticipates one-on-one discussions with the Towns in the next several months to garner municipal buy-in.
- c. Overview of 9/18/2024 Roundtable Discussion: The September roundtable spurred discussion on how to better coordinate emergency planning and preparedness activities that will improve the Region’s ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from all disasters”. The conversation revealed several areas of concern related to transient populations, access and functional needs, and limited knowledge with grant writing and the Public Assistance process. The overarching issue of limited capacity and the loss of generational knowledge was also addressed. Potential actions to close these gaps include expanded communication and collaboration with community partners and targeted training courses; see here for more information.
- d. Schedule of Emergency Management Activities: Given the ongoing shifts with the regional recovery network and the COAD, the yearly calendar of emergency management activities is not well developed. O’Brien would like the opportunity to incorporate activities tailored to the findings of the roundtable, and this process will take some time. She encouraged the Committee to contact her if there were any additional topics to be addressed.

REMC meeting recordings can be viewed at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCngReaqDYcXwliit75D6ayTw/videos>

VIII. **Additional Business** *(This item is for matters that were not listed on the Agenda)*
Eric Pulver posed a proposition to the Committee regarding RRDC and REMC alignment. He proposed that the RRDC first has smaller conversations with key partners to determine their capabilities in supporting emergency preparation, response, and recovery. Then, the municipalities would be pulled in to articulate needs and form a linkage between the two (needs and capabilities). Vice Chair Sotirakis expressed approval for this approach.

IX. **Next Meeting – March 19, 2025 @5:30 PM**
Mantello made the motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Bagnall. No further discussion. The motion was approved, and the meeting adjourned at 6:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Maggie O'Brien, Emergency Management Planner at the RRPC.