

Franklin County Emergency Management

Meeting Minutes

May 16th, 2017

I. Call to Order

Chairman Patti Bailie called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. at the FCEM Office.

Council Present

Patti Bailie, City of Mesa
Bob Koch, Franklin County
Matt Watkins, City of Pasco
Chris Schulte, City of Connell
Bob Metzger, City of Pasco

Council Absent

David Wooten, City of Kahlotus
Brad Peck, Franklin County

Staff Present

Sean Davis, Director.

Guests

Bob Gear, Pasco Fire Chief
Shawn Sant, Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney
Jennifer Johnson, Franklin County Prosecutors Office

II. Discussion and review of answers to 05/11/17 REP and HazMat policy email

Patti Bailie called for a recap of the situation and document provided to the FCEM Board. This comprises the first 5 pages of the board packet. Sean Davis stated that the email was sent to Josh – either Congressman Newhouse’s aid or Senator Brown’s aid. Sean Davis explained that the responses to each of Mr. Thornhill’s statements. Sean Davis’s responses are highlighted in yellow. There was general discussion on each of the items. Chief Metzger wanted the board to know that the Franklin County Dispatch Center is at critical mass. They are down to only 9 dispatchers, running on antiquated equipment and doing the best they can with what they have available. The statements by Chief Thornhill are at best misplaced. Everyone got notified and there was no significant impact on the response. Overall, the rest of the responders were pleased with the communications and redundant systems worked well.

Sean Davis briefed the board on the issue with Mr. Thornhill at the Franklin County Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) during the DOE Site Area Emergency. Mr. Thornhill self-deployed to the ECC, when asked what his role was, he stated “observer”, which means he should not interact with staff and basically be invisible. He proceeded to observe for a short time, then started interacting with ECC staff and removing procedures that are marked by DOE as “Official Use Only” and “Not for Public Release”. At that point in time I asked him what he was doing, he stated, “you don’t want me here”, I said you are not supposed to be taking procedures off the

shelf and interacting with staff. He then slammed the procedure book down and said loudly, "this information should have been up on the screen 30 minutes ago", then proceeded to leave the ECC and speak with the media that was still at the facility. Apparently, this was the rationale for him contacting the FC Prosecutor's Office and stating that I had made disparaging comments to him. The majority of the ECC staff didn't even know this took place. Sheriff Raymond conversed with Chief Metzger and Sean Davis's recap correlates with what the Sheriff witnessed. The PA's Office will speak with Chief Gear for his statement on what he saw/experienced.

Mayor Watkins asked if the response went as planned and was effective/appropriate? Sean Davis confirmed it did and stated there is always items that can be improved upon and learned, but overall the response went as planned/expected. Sean Davis stated that since CodeRED wasn't utilized, because there was no offsite actions needed, we actively courted the media to conduct interviews to help inform the public. FCEM has never posted emergency information on our website. We utilize the DOE Joint Information Center to disseminate information as the primary information release center.

Chief Gear clarified the exercise failure comment from Mr. Thornhill by stating he believes the intent of the comment was to convey that Fire District #5 wouldn't be able to respond to a Nuclear plant emergency and Pasco Fire couldn't respond into District #5 without being asked by Fire District #5. Sean Davis stated the State and FEMA have been told that there are very limited resources able to respond in that area, even if asked by the District(s) via MOUs/agreements. The Franklin County REP plan states that there more than likely will not be a response into the evacuated area. There is a State conflict with Department of Health and L&I interpretation of RCW/WAC. Fire agencies following L&I which prohibits a response into an evacuated area with a known/expected contaminated area. Additionally, the equipment we have issued the responders has to meet responder training levels and again there is a conflict between WA DOH and L&I on these standards. Again, fire follows L&I and at a minimum, responders need to be at a HAZMAT Operations level to use the equipment.

Sean Davis reported that FCEM has requested numerous times for Fire District #5 to share their response SOGs so we have a basic understanding on what their response would be – response/no response/hand off to WSP etc. It seems FPD #5 can't decide whether it is a HAZMAT or not, and they want to separate from an All Hazards type of approach for response planning. We are trying to utilize that type of planning so we can move the REP plan into the realistic response that would take place by law enforcement and fire.

Fire Districts are not signatories to the CEMP, only the municipalities, cities and counties, but all the responders have been given the opportunities to request changes and modification for their specific agencies. The CEMP and REP plans should give a broad overview of the response. The detailed tactical planning of SOGs and procedures are the specific response agencies responsibilities.

Fire District #5 has voluntarily abstained from the REP planning process, but they still have a responsibility to plan for their district. If they would share the intent of their SOGs pertaining to a HAZMAT type of response, we would incorporate that into our planning. As Mr. Thornhill stated in his email, "if it pertains to REP, he has nothing for me".

Sean Davis responded to his first rounds of questions, per the boards direction to state that there is nothing new with his questions, but we would support him on trying to get resolution with WA

DOH and L&I if he chose to pursue that issue.

Sean Davis stated that FEMA is the regulating agency and they have replied to Mr. Thornhill's concerns and questions. Mr. Thornhill does not agree with FEMA's response and explanations of their REP Program Guidelines. Mr. Thornhill is allowed his opinion, but FCEM needs to meet the requirements and guidance and interpreted by the regulator and not Mr. Thornhill. Currently, we meet the REP Program requirements regulated by FEMA.

Sean Davis asked the board for guidance on whether or not to send the document with responses to Congressman Newhouse's aid Josh. The board recommended that Sean Davis retain the response, and if Josh calls asking for answers/response then convey those responses to him.

Matt Watkins stated the main issue is the accusations against Sean Davis that Mr. Thornhill has conveyed. Matt Watkins conveyed that Mr. Davis has the complete confidence and support of the board and that single item needs to be acted upon.

Chief Gear briefed the board that Sean Davis is in a rock and a hard spot. The REP plan needs updated to reflect the actual response that will take place by the responders. We have been working on this, but it doesn't reflect the responders actions completely. Until we can get the L&I/WA DOH issues resolved we won't have a good plan in place. The state hasn't even sent a response acknowledging the request from the Fire Chiefs.

Bob Metzger made a motion to have the Director write a letter to the State Director of Emergency Management stating we had an activation due to the DOE emergency, we had a concern from one of the fire districts stemming from the DOE emergency. FCEM would have liked to been able to address it, but unfortunately with the L&I and WA DOH conflict we can't address it effectively. Please advise of any direction. Sean Davis will draft the letter and have Chief Metzger and Gear review. Once completed, the Chairman will sign the document and it will be sent to the Emergency Management Director at the State and a copy to Fire District #5. Matt Watkins seconded the motion. **Motion Carried**

Chief Metzger would like to make a motion to have the Board create a letter of support for Sean Davis as Director of Franklin County Emergency Management for file. Chief Metzger will draft a letter of support for Board approval at the next FCEM Board Meeting. Matt Watkins seconded the motion. **Motion Carried**

III. Executive Session to discuss potential litigation RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)

Patti Bailie initiated an executive session at 4:40pm to discuss potential litigation in compliance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(i), with an estimated duration of 30 minutes. The board reconvened to an open meeting at 5:10pm. No actions were taken during the executive session.

IV. Next Meeting Date

Thursday, July 13, 2017, at 3:30 p.m.

V. Adjournment

Patti Bailie adjourned the meeting at 5:20pm



SEAN T. DAVIS
Secretary to the Council



PATTI BAILIE
CHAIRMAN