

Connecticut Statewide Citizen Corps Council
Advisory Committee Minutes
July 16, 2015

Attendees: Mark Amatrudo (Wilton); Brenda Bergeron (DESPP/DEMHS); Mike Caplet (DESPP/DEMHS 4); Don Davis (CRCOG); Mary Rose Duberek (DESPP/DEMHS 3); John Field (DESPP/DEMHS 2); Bob Freeman (Hamden); Thomas Gavaghan (DESPP/DEMHS 3); Paul Gibb (NHCOG); William Hackett (DESPP/DEMHS); Carla Iezzi (DESPP/DEMHS 4), Don Janelle (CEMA); Bob Kenny (DESPP/DEMHS 1); Jim Larkin (NECCOG); Henry Pasczuk (DESPP/DEMHS 5); Norma Peterson (Fairfield); Theresa Peterson (DESPP); Susan Prosi (WestCOG/SW Region); Joanna Rogalski (NVCOG); Gary Ruggiero (DESPP/DEMHS); William Shea (DESPP/DEMHS Deputy Commissioner); Rita Stewart (DESPP/DEMHS)

Call to Order: DESPP/DEMHS Deputy Commissioner William Shea called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m. followed introductions.

Public Comments: none

Approval of Meeting Minutes: A motion to approve the June 18, 2015 meeting minutes was made by Norma Peterson and seconded by Gary Ruggiero – approved unanimously.

Old Business

- Correspondence: None
- DESPP/DEMHS Report:

Gary Ruggiero reported on the following:

- Working with DEMHS and utilizing remaining FY 2013 funds, CRCOG facilitated the purchase of CERT apparel, guidebooks and equipment under the D – Equipment/ID grant category. Discussion centered on the distribution of the apparel/equipment. Don Janelle made a motion to divide the items up by the number of active CERT teams and offer the items to those teams. All unclaimed items would then be redistributed on a first come first serve basis. The motion was seconded by Don Davis and approved unanimously. The items are 1250 CERT ball caps, 1750 CERT ski caps, and 1000 work lights. The guidebooks are given out at training.
- Gary reported that there were 35 applications for new classes in 2014 representing 753 students.
- November 14 and 21 will be the CERT Train the Trainer program at Brainard.

DEMHS Director William Hackett reported on the following:

- The 2015 EPPI will be Saturday, October 17th and Wednesday, October 21st.
- Recent renovations to the State EOC included the installation of a Video Display System. This system enhances the visual capability in the EOC and in the Governor’s briefing room. Weather, news, maps, camera systems, etc. displayed during SEOC activations will provide heightened situational awareness of events.
- Director Hackett reminded the council that the homeland security message is to remain vigilant. The recent OPSail event in New London was an example of remaining vigilant and provided a good demonstration of interagency coordination.

Statewide Operational Update: Updates and changes were made to applicable levels. See attached charts.

New Business

- Category A: Training Grant
 - A - Torrington CERT requesting \$ 700 expected project start date: August 2015
 - A - Bristol CERT requesting 1,000 expected project start date: August 15, 2015
 - A - CRCOG for Wesleyan CERT requesting 1,000 start date: October/November 2015

A motion for approval by Don Janelle and seconded by Don Davis, – motion approved unanimously.

- Category B: Equipment - None
- Category C: Planning Grant:
 - C - NV COG Planning 3,000 project start July 1, 2015
 - C - Western CT COG (combined SWRPA & HVCEO) Planning 3,000 project start July 16, 2015

A motion for approval was made by Don Janelle and seconded by Don Davis– approved unanimously.

Other Business/Discussion:

- CERT Trainers - Bob Scata at DEMHS maintains a list of certified CERT trainers/instructors that is shared with the towns upon request. The list of certified instructors has not been published on the website. According to Don Janelle, towns are allowed to choose who provides the CERT training for their teams. They can pick the subject matter expert based on the particular module of training.
- Grant guidance - DEMHS Grants is going to relook at current funding guidance as outlined in the grant applications and completion instructions and will review and update the CERT Grant Application Handbook (2014) working with members of the CCC. All grant applications should be into DEMHS Grants two weeks prior to the monthly CCC meeting to allow DEMHS to determine if funds are available to meet the request. Also there are instances when CERT programs do not request funding for training, equipment, etc. An example was given that classes may not meet the minimum class levels put still want to conduct the class. That example demonstrates that there is more CERT activity being conducted but not recorded in the system. Also by not requesting funding, it is difficult to determine the amount of funding actually needed to support the State's Citizen Corps Program.
- Citizen Corps allocation of the State's Homeland Security Funding, as recommended by the State's Homeland Security working Group
 - FFY 2014 - \$85,000
 - FFY 2015 - \$75,000
- Training Completion – Once a CERT application has been received and approved the town has 6 months to begin the training program. It must then be completed within 3 months of the start date. This is stated in the application form and all applicable guidance materials. A

reason for the 9 month timeframe is to be able to track funding and reallocate funds as necessary to other CERT training applicants. Teams that do not commence training within the 6 month period are removed from the queue and should be notified of this by their regional Citizen Corps council. There was also discussion regarding the planned participation level for training versus actual number of individuals participating in training. The example given was that if there was a training class of 10 registered individuals but only 9 showed up the program would not be penalized and they would receive funding for the completion of the program. DEMHS grants cannot encumber funds until they receive a completion report. All completion reports should be sent in as soon as possible when done. DC Shea added that in progress reviews (IPRs) prevent last minute spending issues.

- CERT programs – The Regional Councils will work with DEMHS in reaching out to the CERTs to verify active CERT programs and to update contact information.
- Citizen Corps Conference – One of the funding sources that was used to pay for previous recent Citizen Corps Statewide conferences is no longer available. DESPP/DEMHS realizes the importance of the statewide conference and the training and networking opportunities it provides the State’s CERT members. A subcommittee of the Statewide Citizen Corps Council will convene to plan for a cost effective but informative and educational conference scheduled for 2016.
- Citizen Corps Council By-laws- Brenda Bergeron thanked the council members for suggested language to the by-laws. All suggestions were incorporated into the new by-laws. Specific changes included allowing for a designee to represent voting members, this provides flexibility and the additional benefit of having more people involved in the process. There was initial concern that the by-laws made the membership DEMHS “heavy”. The intent was that DEMHS would not have majority control over the council but that providing additional staff supports DEMHS’s commitment to the continued success of the State’s Citizen Corps program. A co-chair hierarchy was established, a local chair and a DEMHS chair (being a DEMHS Regional Coordinator). The other four DEMHS Regional Coordinators were added to the membership because of their role in the CERT activation process and their intimate knowledge of the activity levels and emergency activations of the CERTs in their regions. They will also share best practices with the committee. A DEMHS Planner was added to assist with meeting minutes and other logistics. The Grants unit was added to provide for better situational awareness and information on the status of grant funding. The DEMHS Trainer will continue as the State’s CERT Coordinator. Additionally, a steering committee was established to vet issues and provide situational awareness for the larger group to vote on. The by-laws reinforced the role of the Regional Emergency Planning Teams (REPTs) in all emergency management programs including CERT by making sure the REPTs appointed who they wanted to represent the region on the Statewide Citizen Corps Council. It was not meant to remove current active members but to strengthen their relationship with the REPTs that had not been clearly outlined in the original by-laws.
 - A motion was made to accept the by-laws by Norma Peterson and seconded by Paul Gibb, the motion voted on and approved unanimously.
 - Co-Chairs were appointed by DC Shea
 - Mark Amatrudo, Wilton
 - Thomas Gavaghan, DEMHS Region 3 Coordinator
- Meeting location – The town of West Hartford has been very generous in providing a meeting space for the monthly CCC meetings. Starting with the September 17th CCC meeting the location will alternate between DESPP headquarters in Middletown and the State

EOC in Hartford. To make it easier for CCC members to participate/attend meetings DEMHS will look into the availability of utilizing conference call technology.

- Annual Oath Requirement – Don Janelle expressed concern that making sure CERT members are sworn in annually is a difficult process. He asked why can't members be sworn in once at graduation. The issue is that programs with large rosters may not be able to verify or complete the annual requirement. An argument for making sure members are sworn in annually is that for each activation the EMD is certifying on the form that the CERT members listed are trained to do the job they are being activated for. An annual swearing in allows the official in charge of the group to verify the members' current commitment and capabilities. DC Shea said DEMHS would look at this issue.

Regional Council Updates:

Joanne Rogalski – NVCOG – Donna Cobelli, Region 5 SART, will be conducting Animal Shelter training 8/13 at the Watertown FD.

Paul Gibb – NHTCOG – Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in Torrington is doing a session on the use of durable medical goods (wheelchairs, etc) in shelters.

Robert Kenny – DEMHS R1 – Bob reported out for Region 1 SART. Dr. Yessenow conducts monthly talks for SART training, most recently on bears and coyotes.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Next Meeting Date: September 17th at DESPP HQ, Middletown

Future meeting dates for 2015: October 15th; November 19th; and December 17th.