MINUTES OF LEPC MEETING – August 8th, 2023

LOCATION:
PSTC & Virtual

ATTENDANCE:
LEPC Members:
Steve Wittmer, Jim Fry, Benjamin Russell, George Dula, James Weller, Michael Jones, Megan Young, Willard Troxel, John Weed

OEP Staff:
Beverlee Stemple, Jason Wilson, Amber Glenning, Todd Stieritz

Guests:
Patrick Till of Electronic Fluorocarbons
Chris Anderson of Electronic Fluorocarbons
Pat Cornell
Ethan Donnelly
Michaeleen Pacholski
Bill Gares
Michael Williams

CALL TO ORDER:
Chairman Wittmer called the meeting to order at 1306 hrs. The meeting was opened with the pledge of allegiance. Chairman Wittmer asked if there were any issues with the meeting minutes for the 05/09/2023 meeting. Ms. Stemple mentioned that there was an error in the minutes that was corrected by Ms. Glenning. Chairman Wittmer asked for a motion to accept the
05/09/23 meeting minutes. Mr. Fry made a motion to accept 05/09/2023 meeting minutes, motion seconded by Mr. Troxel. All members voted and the minutes were approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
No unfinished business was reported.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

SARA Report:

Ms. Stemple stated that the last phase of updating the plans was on July 31st. All but two sites have submitted and the window for submission is closing shortly. The reviewing of the plans is going smoothly. She is reminding sites to only submit affected pages of the report and to remember that facilities are submitting reports for 2022 this year. She stated that she has reviewed 147 plans this year and the EHS level is 5.5 million pounds within Montgomery County. This ended her report.

Chairman Wittmer clarified with Ms. Stemple that the EHS level being reported was the level in the county in 2022.

Ms. Glenning gave her SARA report. As of August 8th, there has been a total of $150,800 collected in SARA revenue. Of the $150,800 collected, $105,000 were collected from chemicals fees and $16,400 were collected in planning fees. 359 facilities have paid this year so far. Payment reminders were sent to delinquent accounts and $29,400 has been collected from these facilities. 67 payments have been made using the online card payment option.

Clerical issues with Hazconnect, which is the county’s third-party software that generates and distributes invoices based off of information collected from the Tier II reports, were identified. Some payments were received via credit card but were not being tracked appropriately by Hazconnect. Payments have either been entered multiple times, entered for the wrong invoice, or not entered at all. She has been working with their Help Desk Team to rectify these errors and should have all these problems corrected by the new billing cycle.

Chairman Wittmer asked both Ms. Stemple and Ms. Glenning to get an idea of facilities that are out of compliance with reporting and payment for the next meeting. The hope is that the LEPC can get 100% of the facilities in the county to comply. Ms. Stemple added that there are approximately 20 sites that have not submitted their Tier 2 reports through PATTS for CY2022 and prior years. These facilities have been notified by their respective fire marshals that they are required to file. Chairman Wittmer suggested escalation through the EPA for facilities that are not in compliance.

Hazardous Materials:
Mr. Pursell left no report for Ms. Glenning or Mr. Willson to report.

Emergency Management:
Mr. Wilson reported on the Division of Emergency Management. The County Emergency Operations Plan and Hurricane Ida After Action Review Implementation is underway. EOC Conception of Operations has been implemented and the EOC procedures are being updated. Debris Management SOGs and Damage Assessment SOGs are under review.

Fire Department Supplemental Revenue Replacement Project Grants were sent out to 69 fire departments last week to supplement financial losses due to the inability to fundraise during the COVID-19 pandemic. The average amount awarded to the companies was $25,000.

The Municipal Emergency Operations Plan is at 40% completion. There will be a big push in the last few months to get them up to speed.

The EOC Warehouse & Garage project is approaching completion. Mr. Willson hopes that the building will be occupied in September or October. A pumphouse with two fire pumps will be installed to service both buildings to correct the pressure issue. The county has selected two contractors to complete it and is looking for a general contractor to oversee the project. Work will most likely begin prior to the general contractor being appointed. The move from the Upper Dublin Warehouse to the new EOC Warehouse should begin around October, which will bring the Logistics crew to Eagleville rather than Upper Dublin. An open house or LEPC meeting will be held at the new warehouse to show the LEPC.

Two Logistics positions were filled, as was stated at the last meeting. One logistics position is still open. The Assistant Director for Special Operations position is still vacant. The Emergency Preparedness Specialist – Chemical Safety was filled by Amber Glenning. The LGS Training/Planning Specialist position was filled and is awaiting approval by the commissioners. Some positions are on hold until the county finishes the compensation study. A US&R Program Coordinator will hopefully be hired in the next month or two. An Assistant Director for Planning position was proposed for the 2024 budget.

The 2024 Budget was submitted and included program increases to support sustainment, maintenance, and replacement of equipment and programs.

HazMat 81 was delivered, and the equipment mounting is underway. The truck is planned to be in service by the end of September. This will be the first new truck for the Hazmat Team since 2005.

The Foam Tender Project is out for bid and should be closing soon. There is not as much interest in the project as hoped due to the specialty nature of the project. At least one vendor has committed to a bid. This ended his report.

Chairman Wittmer expressed agreement and interest in having an in-person meeting at the November 14th meeting to see the new truck and the new warehouse. He asked Ms. Glenning to send out a confirmation email as the meeting approaches.

Chairman Wittmer asked Mr. Stieritz if he felt that it was a good idea to post news articles about the grants awarded to the fire companies and the train derailment on the LEPC website. Mr. Stieritz stated that he felt it was not a good idea to post articles from specific outlets so as to
avoid the perception of giving preference to specific outlets out of the multitude of outlets that covered these events. Chairman Wittmer agreed to not post links to these articles on the LEPC website.

**Physicians Response Team:**

No report/representative.

**Fire and Rescue Services:**

Mr. Weed reported on the Fire Academy administration. Notable update are as follows:

- 13 HazMat Awareness classes ran with 185 enrolments
- 6 HazMat Operations classes ran with 88 enrolled
- 24 HazMat Operations refreshers (23 completed) ran with 603 enrolled
- 3 HazMat Tech Refreshers ran with 21 enrolled
- 2 Hazmat Awareness Certification classes ran with 92 enrolled
- 1 Hazmat Operations Certification class ran with 6 enrolments
- So far this year, the academy ran 179 classes with 3149 enrolments for 28,132 hours of training.

Mr. Weed asked the members of the LEPC if they were aware of why the in-house Haz Mat Ops refresher courses are offered to fire companies free of charge, but if students come to the Fire Academy for the Haz Mat Ops refresher, they pay $10. He stated that there have been about 500-600 students that were put through that class for free. Mr. Weed asked if this funding had previously come from the LEPC. Chairman Wittmer stated he was unsure and asked if Mr. Wilson knew any information. Mr. Wilson stated that he will check in with Michelle Jackson to see if there was federal funding previously and will report back to the Fire Academy. Chairman Wittmer suggested keeping track of classes taken and the approved budget for these classes to show if the budget is getting tight and bring this up at the November meeting. Mr. Weed reiterated that he was not necessarily worried about not making money rather was curious as to why the Fire Academy cannot charge for in-house Haz Mat Ops refreshers. Mr. Weller brought up that there may be a lack of motivation for fire companies to use the in-house training option if they are paying the same amount for classes either way. Chairman Wittmer suggested that the Fire Academy do whatever is easier for the volunteer firefighters to get the training.

**Public Health:**

Ms. Young gave her report. The OPH is going through their medical countermeasures’ enhancement. The contract was awarded to Constant Associates out of California. This will look at their Points of Dispensing programs and other programs, and use lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to improve moving forward. This will be about a year long joint project between OPH and DPS.

The OPH is getting ready for their community vaccination program. They will be doing flu vaccines in the fall. They hope to have COVID-19 booster vaccines as well.

The OPH will be running a distribution exercise with Limerick Township on Aug 17 for potassium iodide in preparation for the LGS exercise. This ended her report.
Additional Reports:

No report given.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Russel from PA DEP made a comment regarding the recent train derailment in Whitemarsh. He stated that there is still one Hazmat rail car that is sitting track side. The township ran into some logistical issues, so the DEP is periodically checking in on the rail car and working on getting it removed in a timely fashion. All other rail cars were offloaded this past weekend.

Chairman Wittmer asked Mr. Wilson who is supposed to be watching the rail car to make sure that this is getting done. Mr. Willson stated that Brandon Pursell (CH81) is aware of the issue and is working closely with Mr. Russel and the DEP. DPS has not heard anything from the municipality yet. Mr. Wilson reiterated that DPS is not monitoring the rail car daily and that it is the responsibility of the railroad and clean-up company to oversee the project. The DPS and DEP have worked together to make sure that the sink hole that caused the accident was fixed. Mr. Russel stated that he is in constant contact with the Whitemarsh Fire Marshal and that the clean-up company is checking the rail car daily. He confirmed that the site is still secured.

Mr. Willer reported that he retired from the Airbase and is still involved with Airforce Auxiliary. He is going to check in to see if they have another representative taking his place. He also stated that PEMA has purchased 3 wide area mapping cameras that are mounted to aircraft. This is an asset available to the county but must be requested through PEMA. Funding of the mission would most likely be paid for by the Airforce or PEMA.

Chairman Wittmer asked Mr. Wilson to inform Mr. Pursell of that asset. Mr. Willson stated that there is a meeting next week with PEMA and they may bring up this topic then.

Mr. Jones from the Fire Chief’s association asked if there was an update on foam disposal. Mr. Willson stated that they are waiting to hear back about contracting. He hopes to hear something back soon and has a meeting scheduled with the purchasing department to address this and other contracting issues. He hopes to have the information available by the September meeting but cannot be sure. Mr. Willson stated that the same project will be implemented next year with the same grant in order to gather anything left over from this year’s project.

VISITOR COMMENTS:

Mr. Bill Gares introduced himself. He is the HES manager at Arkema in King of Prussia. He attended in place of Patrick Cornell and offered his assistance if the LEPC needs it.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

November 14th, 2023, at 1300 hrs. This meeting will tentatively be held at the EOC in Eagleville to show the new warehouse and HM81 truck. An email will be sent out to confirm the location as more information becomes available. Chairman Wittmer suggested another virtual meeting if the EOC warehouse is not completed. Mr. Willson suggested an in-person meeting to get the opportunity to see everyone again.
ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Troxel and seconded by Mr. Fry. All members were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 1352.