



STEBEN COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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**Timothy D. Marshall, Director
Kenneth J. Forenz, Deputy Director**

FIRE ADVISORY BOARD

12/2/20

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Members present for this Zoom meeting were:

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Tim Marshall | Ken Forenz | Kelly Fitzpatrick |
| Tina Goodwin | Jim Webster | Glen Miller |
| Max Wilson | Evan Brown | Larry Day |
| Brad Davies | John Ford | Brian McCarthy |
| Todd Hall | | |

A motion was made by Jim Webster to accept the minutes of the previous meeting, and Tina Goodwin seconded. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

COORDINATOR’S REPORT:

Tim gave an update on the radio project. The issue they had at Jasper was interference from a paging company out of Pennsylvania, who had a transmitter that was interfering with the frequency. That issue was resolved last week, but there is still another issue that hasn’t been resolved. They talked with a Motorola engineer last week, and they will have someone on site this week to troubleshoot and try to identify what the issue is. Hopefully we can get this resolved quickly, and move forward to system testing.

The fiber optic is in the process of being run to the Alfred site. The telephone poles are in place, and we are working with Southern Tier Network and Allegany County to get the fiber in. We should have connectivity to the Whitesville site once it’s in place.

Tim reported that training surveys were sent out to departments in November and we had 27 out of 43 departments return them. We met with Corey a few weeks ago to talk about a plan for training with the COVID restrictions. At this time, we won’t start anything until after the first of the year. We are working on a Haz Mat 1st Responder Ops course in the Hornell area, possibly at Howard. We are also trying to get approval to run the Fire Police course in Canisteo. Our preliminary plan is a BEFO course in the Corning area in late February-early March. We would like to run an Ice/Cold Water Rescue course, but that will require State approval. We will have a meeting in the near future with the instructors to plan out any additional courses and will get a training schedule out as soon as that’s completed.

Tim gave an update on COVID. They activated the EOC again, and began operations at the beginning of October. There are six working in there – himself, Jack Wheeler, Darlene Smith, Ken Forenz, Matthew Marmor, the Emergency Planner for Public Health, and Lorelei Wagner, the Public Information Officer for Public Health. The case counts continue to increase. The total cases since the COVID started is currently 1,938. We have reported 27 new cases today, and daily averages continue to increase up to about 30 cases a day. We are holding 300 active cases – current individuals that have COVID that we are tracking within the County. There are 1,168 individuals in isolation across the County, and we surpassed the 100 deaths yesterday, with 102 current. There are 18 hospitalized currently. Our seven day average of positivity rate continues to climb, and is currently at 8.5%.

We continue to have daily conference calls with the Governor's office, to talk about issues across the State. Right now we are not part of the color codes. Chemung Co. is still in yellow and orange.

Jim Webster from Bath VA reported on the Fire Department who were hit with positive cases, and it was a challenge keeping staffed. He said they are going to open an infusion clinic for antibodies at the VA, and will hopefully have that up and running in the next few weeks. The VA is going to get the Moderna vaccines, which do not require a booster. They are currently operating at about 30%.

Tim stated they are heavily into the vaccine planning portion of COVID response. They are working with Matthew Marmor and the Public Health Department, and have given the State our dispensing plan. The first round will be a phased distribution vaccination so the first round will be hospitals and nursing homes. Also, the EMT's and paramedics will be part of that initial vaccination. They will then phase down to the 1st Responders, and all the way to the general population. He stated it seems like every day they change the groups within the phases, but he will keep everyone updated as they know more. Right now, they are saying the first round of vaccine could arrive as early as mid-December and then potentially moving into the first of the year.

911:

Tina reported they hired two people in October. Unfortunately they lost one of the candidates right before training began. The other dispatcher has already been cleared for the two Law Enforcement positions, is working independently, and will be going to Fire/EMS training at the beginning of the year. They are interviewing this week to hire two more people. There are only four names left on the list, but there is a test coming up in January, which they have been pushing out through social media, so hopefully they will have some applicants. Applications were due last week.

Tina stated Brian McCarthy has previously asked about connectivity licenses for the CAD on Android for Fire, and she is happy to report they have received authorization for 62 more licenses, which is more than enough to handle what they have now, plus anyone who decides to get on that platform from Fire and EMS.

The County has posted the 911 Director position. The deadline for applications is January 2nd, so they are hoping to know something by the end of January.

OLD BUSINESS:

Tim reported the he spoke with Mid-State Communications regarding the Microwave project, as they are currently on-site doing site walk-throughs. They will be starting additional microwave equipment installations

next week, and getting ready for the cutover. They had to do some work with the radio network in order to be able to tie into the microwave.

The next project will be Command Simulcast channel. The equipment has come in, and they are in the process of getting ready to install around the first of the year. Hopefully by the second quarter, they will have the simulcast channel ready to go.

Tim reported that again, with the COVID restrictions they can't get the burn building shipped from Canada yet. This project is on hold until they can ship.

Tim also reported on the EMS study – they have been talking with the consultants and they have most of the data work completed. They were missing some CAD data from AMR, as a lot of their transports and non-emergency calls are tracked on their own CAD. They did get that data, so now they will be working on putting surveys together based on agency input. Due to COVID, the process has been slowed down significantly.

Kelly Fitzpatrick stated there was a question at the last meeting regarding radio surveys. Tim believes Ken might have answered that question, but Tim thought they got all of the radio surveys back. Kelly asked what the surveys were for. Tim stated they were basically trying to determine which departments had their radios, were installed in their apparatus/vehicles, had their pagers, and were ready for transition to the high band system. They wanted to make sure they captured completely the agencies that were fully ready to go, and which agencies still needed to purchase or install equipment. Kelly asked how soon they would know which departments are ready. Ken stated 41 out of the 43 departments have returned surveys. They have not gotten to the phase yet of figuring out the migration. He said most departments are pretty much prepared once they are ready to switch over to the high band. Kelly asked if we could have an update for the next meeting.

Glen Miller asked Tim what the requirements are going to be for the usage of the Burn Building once that is installed, and will there be training set up to facilitate it. Tim stated they had drafted up a Training Center Use policy a while ago, which needs to be updated with the new burn building, but certainly updated to reflect the new Live Fire requirements of having a Level II Instructor for live burns, and making sure we are in compliance with NFPA 1403. He added that we need to make sure all departments know that if they are going to use the Training Center for live burn operations, this is what you need to follow. We are hoping to get Linsey more involved in this area and being able to oversee the activities for training. Glen asked if Tim could please send out a copy of the existing policy to the Board. Tim stated he would get that sent out to all of them.

Kelly asked Tim if he will need to bring that policy back to the Legislature for approval. Tim doesn't believe they need to as it's not a plan, but more of a usage policy. He will check with Jennifer at the Attorney's office to see what the legal requirements are.

Tim wanted to welcome Evan Brown to the meeting tonight. He asked how he was feeling and to give an update on his recovery. Evan replied that he has a few more appointments to check on his healing, but doesn't anticipate being able to even start driving until the end of January. It will be a slow process.

NEW BUSINESS:

Tim stated they are at 100% for their fire reporting for 2019. This will give us \$1000 in scholarship funds at the Academy for departments that might want to attend training there. Tim feels most departments are keeping up much better with the reporting than they used to in the past.

Tim didn't really have any other new business, as COVID has limited a lot of things.

The next meeting will be held on January 27th, which will probably be via Zoom, but we will keep you updated.

Larry Day made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Jim Webster seconded, all were in favor, and the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauri Robords

