

**MINUTES**  
**HARVEY COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (LEPC)**  
**Harvey County Emergency Operations Center**  
**120 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Newton, Kansas 67114**  
**June 12, 2024 @ 9:00 am**

Present: Mike Anderson, Jim Bethards, Skip Cowan, Jamie Dehler, Craig Dunlavy, Kyle Fiedler, Brody Flavin, Daniel Keane, Lona Kelly, Jim Leftwich, Lee Miller, Lynnette Redington, Becky Reimer, Diana Waddell-Gilbert, Richard Roller, Craig Smet

Brody Flavin called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Mr. Flavin asked the committee if anyone had any questions about the agenda, no questions or concerns were brought forth, Mr. Flavin then accepted the agenda without a motion. **Agenda Approved.**

Mr. Flavin then asked if there were any corrections or additions that need to be addressed in regards to the minutes of the April 10, 2024 meeting. Diana Waddell-Gilbert made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Craig Dunlavy seconded the motion, **Minutes Accepted.**

**Old Business** – Mike Anderson took to the floor to explain some issues in regards to the next meeting at and the original location that was proposed. Skip Cowan joined in to advise that as of this morning there had been a miscommunication with AGCO and we are not able to lock down a date or time for a tour that we had originally discussed. Mike then advised that due to this change we would be holding the next LEPC meeting back in the EOC located in the basement of the Law Enforcement Center and start working on the requirements for the upcoming yearly requirements. Skip asked that if anyone else had any ideas of a location that they might have available for the LEPC to tour, or a place they might want to visit in mind to please let him or Mike know and they would try to make arrangements for upcoming meetings. He advised that they were working on a couple of ideas, but wouldn't for now this would be the upcoming planned meeting.

**New Business** - Next Mr. Anderson discussed the May 19th 2024 Storms that struck Burrton, Halstead, and Newton. He gave the group on update on progress as far as the damage he saw while out in the communities and that there had already been two forms of damage assessments done in parallel with the Red Cross and the County Appraiser's Office.

Richard Roller with the Red Cross joined in on the discussion and advised that when his group ventures out to do an external review, and in fact when they went through the Burrton and Halstead area, they focus on residential areas only at that time. They did find that there were some that according to assessment standards are considered inhabitable due to the utilities being inaccessible at the time, but that structurally there was little issues. It took them about two days to go through everything and that the damage was pretty extensive.

Mike then let the group know that the Emergency Management Department has moved into the phase of recovery where we are now working on an almost daily basis with KDEM for the public assistance side

of the support effort. That soon will we start to help some of the businesses that were also affected but as you can imagine this will all take time and is a long process at best

Mr. Anderson then thanked everyone for their help and that of course we need to keep the way of safety for those in our organization as the number 1 priority as we continue to move forward with the extensive cleanup and trying to restore a sense of normal life to the communities that were hit by this straight line wind storm. He added that, when we come together into this room, we need to remember that each organization has boundaries and that when it comes to safety we are talking about not only physical, but mentally and spiritually. So it's important to know that your organization's boundaries remain in tack for their safety in all protocols. We need to be able to stay within those boundaries and if it means we bring in extra help or other personnel or different organizations, that is OK because we need to stay within the boundaries of those groups of people. He advised he knows that we all know that but he wanted to clarify that it is ok to say NO and we can respect that and encourage it.

Lee Miller then took to the floor and gave his update that the state has not taken the steps yet to move forward with a written declaration for Kansas. He believes that is due to the fact that the papers have not stacked up to show the state's threshold just yet. There are no solid numbers that he believes are in for a total amount, but that he imagines it will be bigger than we currently think but until that is a go ahead it will affect the public assistance side of the recovery for everyone involved.

Lynnette Redington with the Health Department wanted to take this time and remind everyone of a job well done because even though Harvey County did in fact see extensive damage there were no deaths or injuries from this storm and there was a great chance there could have been. So we were very fortunate.

Kyle Fiedler with the City of North Newton asked if the vegetation does count towards the damage number estimates in the final total and cleanup. Mike advised that the cleanup hours go to government response so that is how those are calculated for FEMA.

Harvey County Commissioner Becky Reimer followed up that question by asking if during our reporting we had mentioned there was a business destroyed in our area. Mike clarified that there were 8 actually but those definitions are difference a based off a RAPID assessment and what the qualifications were at the time of that assessment.

Jim leftwich with the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, advised that once we are very close to our threshold then KDEM sends out an actual team that does the deeper assessment and would know in greater detail and with better numbers what was an actual destroyed property, one that is still habitable and one that needed some repairs.

With no further questions Mike yielded the floor to Skip Cowan who then gave a presentation on the ESF-6 function of Sheltering.

### **Presentation - Sheltering**

The purpose of ESF 6 Mass Care is for emergency assistance, temporary housing, and to establish how mass care, housing, and human services will be coordinated to meet the needs generated by disasters in Harvey County. We have established shelter sites identified in each city mainly in schools, churches, fire stations, city offices, long term care facilities and currently 21 shelter sites are available at last count.

The biggest capabilities that the ESF 6 Mass Care can offer for sheltering people is of course a short term arrangement setup, and those are warming or cooling shelters.

We also know from past experience like the Fox Meadows fire last year that some individuals will arrive at a shelter with animals and that takes a different aspect into consideration for sheltering needs. It can be done, but it is something we would have to partner with an outside agency to help us with. One of the groups for instance that Skip mentioned was a Horse Sanctuary Group known as Hope in the Valley Equine Rescue and Sanctuary. They do help us for free but of course but as you can imagine would ask for hay replenishment eventually and that would end up being worked out at the end of all the recovery process hopefully.

Skip went on to advise that 72 hours is what they consider the short term sheltering for humans but can be longer if need be and we begin discussing with hotels or apartment for longer time frames at some point hopefully around the 24 to 48 hour mark.

One of the things that Harvey County is very fortunate to have access to is one of eight 6' X 12' small trailer which contains universal supplies like cots, blankets, some medical supplies, some staples, and they are literally set up just as the other.

The Mass Care group also has the ability to provide food with assistance from outside agencies like Red Cross and United Way but of course we need to make sure we serve food in a healthy way and that we can show how the food was cooked, handled, stored and served. Mr. Cowan gave the example of the City of Halstead and how after the May 19th Storms they were able to hand out 400 meals to residents over a three-day period while they worked to restore and recover their homes.

He also shared how the energy company Evergy took care of their workers and provided sandwich boxes, but ordered about 80 boxes too many, so the employees chose to share them with the citizens of Halstead as well.

Mike Anderson then added how when the Emergency Management team were out in the communities and doing our own visual assessments you could see the sense of community there was alive and well in all the chaos and destruction.

Diana Waddell-Gilbert with Prairieview stated that right now she felt they don't have a formal evacuation plan or static plan on where to go and wanted to know if it would be a good idea to talk to the 21 shelters and set up an MOU. Skip advised if they need to do some form of evacuation that more than likely that request could come through the Emergency Management Department and we could facilitate that plan for her and assist in getting everyone evacuated. Diana advised that right now her biggest issues as you could imagine is transportation. Skip and Lee Miller both advised they would like to discuss this with her further and maybe ask a few questions and help her set up a time to meet with her and her safety personnel and work out a plan that she could feel comfortable with.

Mike Anderson then added that just as Fox Meadows we can activate the EOC solely to support any efforts that Prairieview might have, it doesn't have to be just for an entire county wide emergency.

**Adjournment:** Brody Flavin then asked if any of the committee members had any further questions, as none were brought forth Mr. Flavin asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Skip Cowman made the motion which was seconded by Daniel Keane, therefore the meeting was **adjourned at 9:48am**

**Next Meeting Next meeting August 14th 2024 from 9:00am - 10:00am**  
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