Minutes
Local Emergency Coordination Committee
May 7, 2020
(Virtual meeting due to COVID-19 safety guidelines)

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:01 PM.
   Present: John Elsesser, Annemarie Sundgren, Mark Palmer, Rob Biller, Emily Oliver, Margaret Khan, John Alosky, Jim McLoughlin, Mark Kiefer, Ryan Boutin, Ken Boutin, Donald Figiela, David Petrone, Bud Meyers, Eric Trott, Amanda Backhaus, Julie Blanchard

2. Audience of Citizens: none

3. COVID-19 Update:
   John Elsesser noted that we are merging two meetings today – the monthly LECC meeting and the weekly COVID-19 Planning Group, so there are a lot of people participating. Julie Blanchard said it is nice to have such a large group.

   Rob Miller shared the latest statistics. There are 138 confirmed cases in the Health District with seven fatalities. The State has experienced a decline in hospitalizations for the past 14 days. We hope that continues to the next milestone of 5/20. Coventry is up to 27 cases. Currently we have completed 107 case contact investigations. We are going to participate in a beta test of a statewide platform and anticipate training next week. We expect full transition by the 20th. Staff has been directed to work with local COVID officials as we work on phase 1 guidelines to reopen the State. We are waiting for State guidelines - an imagine they will cover a number of areas including restaurants and retail. One area we anticipate additional guidance for is beaches and public settings. We sSent out a memo to CEOs and frontline town staff today that the Health District is fully transitioned to the Viewpoint cloud payment system. Options include website or mail applications, or a drop box at the main office. Questions can be directed to Millie.

   Julie Blanchard asked if the payment system is for farmers’ market vendors, etc? Rob said yes, anything we charge a fee for. The only exception is food license renewals. Those who renew on an annual basis do so in March and it will be set up by then. We don’t anticipate many market applications this year because they can’t do sampling.

4. Agency updates:

   Police Department – Mark Palmer:
   - We had our CALEA assessment Monday-Wednesday. It was done remotely by two assessors. It went very well. They had an opportunity to talk with 10 staff members and did a video of the police department. They went through the booking area. They talked with a number of people. The report will be issued and a remote conference will take place instead of the venue at Oklahoma City.
   - We continue to make two pick-ups per week for PPE. Some of the equipment has gone to to EMS/Fire, some to PD and some for local businesses.
   - The new boat is going in the water on Monday. Docks are in at the boat launch as of today. The boat is really nice and we are glad we were able to get it. We had to do some work on it
but it should service us well. We will auction off the old one on GovDeals. He will send a link to the Town Manager.
- Staff are doing well. Everyone is coming to work. No vacation or overtime is being used.

Fire/EMS/Emergency Management – Jim McLoughlin:
- We are following up on a request from DEMAHS on the resource update. This is to be done before 6/1.
- Kudos to the FD for their response to a structure fire this morning.
- We continue to develop, review and revise policies for a unified department as we build a manual in preparation for 7/1. Some of the policies have been implemented already.
- We got information that $100 million is being released through FEMA for PPE. We will be looking at what level we are at to engage in the process. It is a quick turnaround with an application due by next Friday.
- Jim is working with Parks & Rec, Human Services, and the Health District on a draft plan for summer camps and beaches. OEC will be releasing additional guidance.
- We are also working in collaboration with the farmers’ market to make the drive-through market work by providing fire police support. We will have two personnel each Sunday, plus Ray Oliver will be there.
- The FD is using Zoom for meetings and drills. It is going well.
- We continue to do birthday drive-by parades, which lift community spirit.
- We are working on an ID card template.
- Social media posts are up – we are trying to drive the positive.
- We are also looking to reestablish our status as a heart-safe community. Bud Meyers noted that Alex Bohr is working on that, and should be done by the end of the week.

North Coventry Volunteer Fire Department – Bud Meyers/John Alosky:
- Bud provided stats for the month of April:
  - 1 trash fire
  - 2 MVA’s
  - 3 Hazardous materials
  - 6 electrical wiring/equipment problems
  - 9 power lines down
  - 9 good intent
  - 2 false alarms
  - 3 EMS
- We have new drivers: Rick Grimaldi for ET211 and 311, and Jared Dewy for Truck 111.
- We have done about 30 of the combined birthday party parades. There has been fantastic support. Sgt. Opdenbrouw has been fantastic with scheduling – thanks to the PD for their involvement.
- John Alosky noted that North Coventry is working toward elections coming up in June, and we are working closely with Jimmy and John on modifications to contract.

EMS – DJ Figiela:
- Thanks to the paid staff and volunteers who have been working hard during the pandemic. Call volume has gone up this past week.
- Stats for the month of April:
  - 79 medical calls for service with 60 transports
  - 57 transports with paid staff and 3 with volunteer staff
  - Of the 57 transports, 20 were suspected to have COVID and universal precautions were utilized. Two transported patients were found to be positive for COVID
3 cardiac arrests – cardiac arrests are up 30% - we only had 10 last year. The county is up 40% for month of April.

- No paid staff or volunteers are out sick for COVID at the present time. One paid staff member has symptoms and is going for testing tomorrow. No volunteers have symptoms.
- We got two new intubation pods that go over patient’s face to help reduce exposure during CPR.
- Thanks to DPW for servicing our vehicles.
- We await receipt of infrared thermometers, which have been on order since April 1.

Coventry Volunteer Fire Association – Ken Boutin:

- All staff is healthy and we hope it stays that way.
- We are adapting training to use distance learning. We had a joint department drill last night using Zoom. It was timely since we had a structure fire this morning. It went well with a quick knockdown.
- We are responding to calls and assisting with EMS.

Fire Police – Ray Oliver:
The Fire police meeting with the farmers’ market went well. We reviewed street layouts and don’t see any issues. We are sending out a note for the final list of interested people and look forward to market season.

Coventry Public Schools – David Petrone:

- The Governor announced that schools are closed for the remainder of the school year. We anticipated this and prepared for it. The next step is to deal with end of year close-out – including return of student belongings, graduation, return of devices, summer school and enrichment camps.
- We anticipate a lot of guidance from the State over the next few weeks and don’t want to do too much work prematurely only to find out that the guidance has changed. Busing is also a consideration given the need for social distancing.
- We are also talking about planning for the 20/21 school year. We are hearing many scenarios from starting up in September and having to close again, living with it, etc. It is just guesswork at this point.
- The free lunch program is serving approximately 340 meals a day, 7 days a week, with pick-ups Monday, Wednesday & Friday.

Public Works – Mark Kiefer:

- We are practicing social distancing. The crew is healthy.
- We are getting out crew back full steam at the end of the month.
- The auxiliary crew is putting recycling stickers on the tipper barrels with two days left.
- The remainder of the crew is working to get maintenance done.
- John Elsesser said that we are re-opening the transfer station just on Saturdays starting this week. We are working to increase safe practices by encouraging payment by check and will not be offering help unloading. It is on overtime to continue isolation of the treatment plant staff.

Human Services – Annemarie Sundgren:

- First impressions as a new employee: she is falling in love with this town. She hasn’t met more generous people in her life. She is overwhelmed by the generosity of town residents.
- The food bank is running fabulously with eight people picking up donations from the vestibule.
- Staff has been fantastic and helpful as she learns how things are done.
- There are a couple of opportunities for improvement that she looking forward to rolling out.
Town Manager – John Elsesser:
- The Presidential Primary has been moved to 8/11. We are working toward holding it at the gym in high school which will free us up from setting up two locations.
- A subcontractor from Sprint is doing some repairs to the tower at Erickson.
- We just signed a contract to get the CGS parking lot expansion going. Earth Dynamics was the low bidder. Given that school is closed they may mobilize as early as 5/18.
- Other projects scheduled for this summer include repairs to auditorium and band room walls at the high school, we are out to bid on asbestos removal with a lot of contractors lining up. We opened bids for unit ventilator replacement – they came in significantly over budget so Fuss is reviewing.
- Cumberland Farms has started work again on a limited basis with full work resuming 6/1.
- There is an EDC forum tonight on assistance for small businesses.
- It is a complicated budget year. There is no typical town meeting or referendum per executive order. The Council agreed to finish a proposed budget by 5/18. There is Board of Education meeting on 5/21 with a presentation to the community by John and Dave on 5/22. Comments to the Council will be due by 5/29 with final budget adoption by 6/1. The goal is to work toward a zero tax increase, backing out revaluation. We anticipate significant impact to capital projects, operating budgets and debt service. The general sense is there will be big segments of the community that will be short on cash.
- Town hall is starting to have discussions about what we need to do to be prepared for full re-opening. We have been doing a good job keeping permits and licensing going. We will probably do a phased-in re-opening once we have protective barriers in place.

Booth & Dimock Memorial Library – Margaret Khan:
- We are plugging along. Staff has been working from home but staying busy with virtual training, online webinars and planning for the future.
- The Bibliomation migration has required a great deal of work. Also social media has significantly increased. Seventy percent of our interactions are coming from program posts. We are offering virtual cooking classes, book clubs, etc.
- We are planning for summer reading and have determined it will probably be virtual. We may start in July instead of early June.
- We are working to implement curbside service 5/26. We collaborated with neighboring towns to ensure we are offering similar services at a similar timeline.
- There is a Finance Committee meeting tonight to review the budget. We had a resignation and will not be filling that position. We are cutting the program budget since it appears it will not take place in the traditional way at least through the end of the calendar year. We are looking at a holiday shut down as a cost savings measure.
- Staff is excited to get curbside pickup going, as are patrons.

Land Use/Development – Eric Trott:
- We are working vigilantly on the farmers’ market for the 2020 season. We are retooling to allow for in-field pick up of online orders. We are working with vendors to work out the logistics.
- We are getting together with local businesses tonight to see how we can assist. We will be working with food service businesses to allow outdoor seating. The zoning agent will work with them to enable permitting.
- The vestibule permit hub has been very successful and we are very busy despite the pandemic.
- Land Use Board and Commission meetings are being done through Zoom and have gone smoothly.
- Our open space properties, trails and parks are getting heavy use. We are pleased to facilitate with online trail maps and maintenance with the stewardship committee.

5. Radio communications/police, fire, public works:
   Jim McLoughlin reported that the next phase would be moving DPW to the new statewide system and abandoning their low band system. We would like to include emergency management in that portion. Tolland County was here yesterday looking at the crooked antenna on the tower. They think it is a broken bracket. It is attached it to the old police department low band antenna which is not being used. We are looking at converting to new pagers to participate in the new system Tolland County is implementing. Low band pagers will no longer be supported. We will try to work with other departments to reduce the per-unit price. We are combining from two systems to one as we gear up for a unified department. There will be some communication expenses coming up as we migrate to the new system.

6. Fire Transition Study Committee Update:
   Jim McLoughlin said that the committee has begun to meet with the Board of Fire Officers. They made a recommendation to the Town Council for the interim chief of the unified department. We will likely meet jointly again in May as the chief begins to select his staff for approval. Some operational changes will be needed in respect to paging and dispatch. We hope to have all that in place before 7/1.

7. Adjournment:
   The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 PM on a motion by Bud Meyers, seconded by Mark Palmer and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Stone