



**POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY, IOWA  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HOMELAND SECURITY**

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Director

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**Pottawattamie County Emergency Management Commission  
205 S Main St, Council Bluffs, IA 51503  
6:00 p.m., Thursday, February 20, 2020**

The meeting of the Pottawattamie County Emergency Management Commission was called to order at 6:05 pm by the Chairman. A quorum was determined with the following present at the meeting:

*Commissioners Present (\* indicated via video conferencing)*

Mayor Bardsley, Underwood	Mayor Kock, Hancock
Mayor Todd, Carson	Mayor Larsen, Walnut
Mayor Wax, Macedonia	Sheriff Danker, Pottawattamie Co.
Mayor Cumberledge, Carter Lake	Mayor Walsh, Council Bluffs
Mayor Zimmerman, Minden	*Supervisor Belt, Pottawattamie Co.
*Mayor Long, Avoca	

*Alternates and Staff (\* indicated via video conferencing)*

Councilman Hannan, Council Bluffs	Councilman Fisher, Treynor
*Councilman Perkins, Oakland	Greg Heine, Neola
Josh Billings, Hancock	Denise Magnuson, Neola
Doug Reed, PCEMA	Michell Bose, Bose
Scott Manz, PCEMA	

Pledge of Allegiance conducted.

**Motion** by Council Bluffs, second Carson – approve the meeting minutes from 6-19-2020. Unanimous vote, motion approved.

**Motion** by Pottawattamie County, second Macedonia – approve the 2-20-2020 agenda. Unanimous vote, motion approved.

**Motion** by Walnut, second Council Bluffs – open the advertised public hearing regarding the proposed FYE2021 Commission Budget. Unanimous vote, motion approved.

- There was no public present for comment on the proposed budget.

**Motion** Hancock, second Carter Lake – close the advertised public hearing regarding the proposed FYE2021 Commission Budget. Unanimous vote, motion approved.

Director Reed provided the commission an update regarding 2019 activities.

- Disaster 4421 response highlights and current recovery status.
- Program updates regarding staff changes, duties, equipment were briefed.

Director Reed provided an outlook for 2020 activities.

- Computer replacement on a federal grant.
- Preparations for potential flooding similar to 2019.
- Overview of anticipated events.

Director Reed provided a proposal regarding the return of employee payroll status to be removed from the county step and grade system to be replaced with a more commission authority-based merit increase system for employees.

- Employees catch up to each other in step and grade rendering tenure and experience invalid for employees.
- Reduces employee incentive to attain new skills and attend personal growth opportunities.
- Allow the realignment of job descriptions to speciality core agency needs (planning, admin, logistics, etc.).
- Return employee pay decision authority back to the commission instead of being placed as a decision of a single jurisdiction that does not have supervisory management of commission employees.

Commission discussion points included:

- Questions about how to do a merit based program. It was discussed that an annual performance appraisal would be the backbone of the system.
- It was discussed that a concern of the county would be that if they approve a certain increase for county staff but the commission approved a higher rate for EMA, it would cause consternation within county personnel. Commissioners

debated whether that concern was applicable as EMA personnel are commission employees and not county employees.

- It was announced that the county was currently updating payroll classifications to include an assessment on the existing step and grade system and that County HR would be willing to work with Director Reed through the process of determining what is in everyone's interest.
- Director Reed advised the commission that with the timing, the potential change in the current county system, and work to be done to make any change that this fiscal year might need to be treated as a "hybrid" or "transition" year to attain the results being desired.
- It was discussed that the commission would now be able to comply with its legal authority in determining the pay and status of its employees instead of it being delegated to another jurisdiction.
- It was determined that Director Reed would make pay recommendations based on employee status and performance, with approval from the commission.
- The Commission asked the thoughts of present employees on what they would like to see, who voiced their support for this proposal.
- There was discussion about the purpose or benefits in updating job descriptions. The director discussed that a longer-term strategic objective would be to develop job descriptions that reflect primary tasks of individual employees and/or specialities that would provide more clarity to individuals, provide support to a merit based salary system, and identify essential duties more clearly than having one standard and generalized description for all employees.

*[Note: Sheriff Danker excused himself from the meeting to attend an additional function.]*

**Motion** by Minden, second by Hancock – to implement the personnel payroll proposal with flexibility to transition during this fiscal year as determined necessary by the director and approve a 3% pay increase to personnel wages for EMA staff for the upcoming fiscal year. Unanimous vote, motion approved.

Director Reed announced the resignation of EMA Specialist Michael Bertacini that was effective February 10, 2020. Michael left the agency to accept a position with the Kansas City, MO Police Department. The director requested authorization to advertise, interview, and hire a replacement as soon as possible. With the potential for new spring/summer flooding, the unknown status of the Wuhan China epidemic that has reached the U.S., and a potentially active national campaign season a focus on hiring someone with experience is a priority. The new employee would be hired the same rate as what Michael would be getting, including any applicable benefits and insurance.

**Motion** by Carter Lake, second Macedonia – authorize the director to hire for the open position.

Director Reed discussed his employment contract. The director proposed that with many things going on and anticipated he would like the commission to entertain a 3 year

contract with a starting increase of 2.5% for year one and a quarter percent increase each year thereafter culminating in a 3% raise for FYE2023.

**Motion** by Walnut, second by Hancock - approve the proposed contract and authorize the Chairman to execute such on behalf of the commission. Vote: (13) Aye, (1) Naye. Motion approved.

Director Reed presented the overall proposed FYE2021 budget for consideration. Commission discussion was conducted on the following topics:


- Explanation of how the 911 operational budget came to be included in the EMA annual budget.
- Explanation of the unencumbered balance (referred to as the reserve fund). The director explained there is currently an estimated budget balance of \$194k with a general target of maintaining around \$200k in the balance. The balance is kept for a quarter of operations should tax revenues be received late or are significantly reduced as well as an emergency fund for critical events, emergencies, and disasters.
- Question was posed regarding funds for radio replacements if the proposed regional grant should be approved. The director explained that money from the reserve fund could be used for maintenance and/or replacement of radios as one is identified needing replaced. However, there would not be enough funds to do a complete agency replacement of vehicle radios and the radio cache maintained by EMA.

**Motion** by Walnut, second by Minden - to approve the proposed budget for FYE2021 as presented by the director and authorize the director and Chairman to execute all required documentation to certify the budget to the County Auditor and Iowa Department of Management. Unanimous vote, motion passed. to approve the proposed budget 2021, Second by Mayor Zimmerman Minden, all were in favor, Motion approved.

Director Reed presented a draft policy related to commission meetings that would include an option for online attendance. The policy was drafted in consultation with guidance provided from the Iowa Public Information Board and the Iowa Freedom of Information Council.

**Motion** by Carter Lake, second by Treynor - to approve "Emergency Management Commission Meeting Policy #2020-01". Unanimous vote, motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Submitted:   
Doug Reed, Director