

Cedar County Emergency Management Commission
1410 Cedar Street
Tipton, IA 52772
(563) 886-3355

Regular Quarterly Meeting:

Thursday, April 8, 2021, 7:00pm

The Cedar County Joint 911 Service Board meeting was held on April 8, 2021. The meeting was held both in-person and by telephone conference with the call originating from the Cedar County EMA Administrative Offices at 1410 Cedar Street, Tipton, IA 52772, with social distancing guidelines in place to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Those attending in-person included: Warren Wethington, Cedar County Sheriff; Jon Bell, Cedar County Board of Supervisors; John Hanna, West Branch Police Chief; Kevin Stoolman, West Branch Fire Chief; Mike Anderson, Bennett Fire Chief; Jill Cinkovich, Mayor of Lowden; William Wagner, Mechanicsville Police Chief; Jacob Koch, Mechanicsville Fire Chief; Lisa Dufour, Tipton Police Chief; Dustin McAtee, Mayor of Stanwood; Joe Sparks, Mayor of Bennett; Jodi Freet, Director Cedar County EMA/911; Kate Ehlers, Office Coordinator EMA/911; Sue Hall, Press.

Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 7:08pm.

Mayor McAtee/Stanwood made a motion to approve the agenda, motion seconded by Sheriff Wethington; Motion passed.

Mayor Sparks/Bennett made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 14, 2021 regular meeting, motion seconded by Mayor McAtee/Stanwood; Motion passed.

Mayor Sparks/Bennett made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 19, 2021 budget meeting, motion seconded by Mayor McAtee/Stanwood; Motion passed.

Chair Bell then yield the floor to Director Freet to discuss expenditures from the previous quarter. Freet discussed receipt of funds remaining from COVID-19 related grants that were submitted. Freet discussed atypical expenditures that included: Printing costs over the months of February and March due to the Cedar County COVID-19 Newsletter (has since been discontinued); February Payment of Hazmat Retainer to Linn County; Dell Marketing for the computer new computers for the EOC (1/2 of payment to be reimbursed through grant). Freet announced that the Walmart grant went towards the purchasing of PPE to restock and restore after COVID-19 depletion. Freet stated that snow removal costs were higher due to the numerous snow events our area experienced. Other expenses that included repair of 2 toilets in the shared restrooms. There were no questions regarding expenditures. Mayor Sparks/Bennett made a motion to approve the expenditures, motion seconded by Mayor McAtee/Stanwood; Motion passed.

Chair Bell then yielded the floor to Freet for discussion of old business.

- Freet informed that if any agencies have members in need of Salamander Credentialling to contact her, we can print those out on a case-by-case basis. While the software is currently limited, we are looking to some technological advances in the coming fiscal year.
- Freet announced that the new EMA truck that was delivered last July will be marked within the 2-3 weeks, this is dependent on weather and temperatures. Having a clearly marked vehicle will assist in gaining confidence from communities as they will be able to have a more visible presence of our agency in Cedar County.
- Freet also stated that starting June 1, 2021 inventories will commence. She will reach out to individual departments to coordinate schedules and timeframes.
- Freet announced that the Multi Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan is nearing completion. She is waiting to receive forms from a few jurisdictions at this time and is attending some school board meetings in the near future regarding this also. We are also awaiting our vendor invoice and final copies from Two Rivers. Following receipt and payment of those services, final copies will be delivered to jurisdictions.
- Freet then gave update to the COVID-19 response:
 - Freet announced that the new EOC projector was approved through the EMPG-S grant and has been installed. Also, the relocation of speakers and installation of microphones within the EOC has been completed, but that those are not yet operational. These updates will help our EOC become a more useful space through technology updates and redundancy measures.
 - Through the received Walmart Grant, a portion was used to purchase N95 masks, and a Theisen's Grant was used to purchase nitrile gloves. Both items are to replenish those put into service from disaster shelters.
 - Freet then gave update regarding both the COVID-19 Newsletters and SitReps. While the COVID-19 newsletters have ended, the SitReps pertaining to COVID-19 will continue. These reports contain a valuable overview and continued information regarding Cedar County's response to the pandemic and EMA is currently the only department ensuring this communication is completed. Even though we are not receiving updates from other departments on a regular basis, they are an important component in ICS and can be used to complete the disaster After Action Report when necessary.
 - Freet then announced that on Monday April 12, 2021 under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, FEMA will be providing financial assistance for COVID-19 related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020. While EMA is not involved in the application or approval process, we do still expect to receive calls from members of the public regarding this opportunity and will forward those calls to FEMA.
- Freet then gave update to EMA's Derecho Response:
 - EMA is still receiving calls regarding FEMA Individual Assistance stemming from the August 10th Derecho. We are still recommending those residents to contact and apply through FEMA. FEMA is still looking at those applications and has, in

the past, given approval in certain circumstances. However, there is no guarantee of approval or funds.

- Generators - Freet is hoping to submit her notice of intent soon to hopefully obtain a generator through a grant for the EMA office and will touch base with those communities and departments who have submitted or are having difficulties submitting to possibly assist in that process.
- Freet announced that the Derecho After-Action meeting was held on March 30, 2020. The final report is in process and will be distributed upon completion. General points taken from the meeting included a general consensus of the difficulty experienced working with FEMA. Difficulties stemmed from the COVID-19 disaster preventing FEMA from deploying representatives to our area, creating hardship in sharing a visual overview of both the damage and our county's response to the disaster. Freet plans on speaking with members of her EMA district at their next meeting to see how other county's handled similar situations and how to escalate through FEMA to find resolutions to these issues. We also discovered that we did not have the local resources and relationships built with local agencies to assist. We are planning on building those relationships with both the Red Cross, local agencies, community churches and organizations to build a catalog of sorts of resources to call on to work seamlessly together. A need for a Special Needs Registry would have been beneficial especially since a large portion of our county was without power for an extended period of time. Freet is also looking into a possible expansion of the Long-Term Recovery Coalition to assist residents and then finally damage assessment. In EMA's initial response to collect Damage Assessments throughout the county it was found that technology had advanced greatly from a paper system that we had been using. The use of a Data Collecting App along with the Damage Assessment forms that the Assessor's office sent out made the process of collecting information much more reliable and accurate. It also gave us an overview of our hardest hit areas.
- The Derecho SitReps that are currently sent out bi-weekly will cease when the After-Action Report has been completed and sent out.
- Freet then spoke on building updates. Freet explained that Unity Point has informed us that the parking lot resurfacing project will unfortunately be placed on hold for two possibly three years due to financial reasons stemming from COVID-19. Freet is concerned with certain areas and may look into the possibility of having those trouble areas patched to reduce hazards. Freet also explained that there are some maintenance and building repairs that will need to take place in the near future, one of which is the lighting in the women's restroom. Currently only half of the lighting is working in the women's restroom and the fixtures themselves may be near end of life. Freet will contact local business for more information on repairing those. Recent repairs included the sink in the breakroom. Freet also noted that the spring has brought on pest issues (ants) which has required additional professional support.
- Freet then gave updates regarding grants. We are still waiting to hear back regarding the Community Foundation Grant. That has a notification date of April 30, 2021. That

grant will be used towards the purchase of weather radios. Freet informed that we are unable to submit grants to the Shell Foundation since they do not serve Iowa. Freet will apply to the Walmart Foundation again. Grant funds from that will be used to purchase promotional and educational materials geared toward children to assist in our preparedness message.

- Freet announced that there may be a need to do a budget amendment in May, she is doing numerous things to ensure that it does not become a necessity but will communicate the need if it does arise.
- As part of the After-Action Report for the Derecho Freet is currently working on the Siren Activation Policy. This is still currently in process and will need to be completed since our Storm Ready designation will need to be updated this year as well.

Chair Bell then yielded the Floor to Freet for discussion of new business:

- Director Freet presented and discussed updates to the Emergency Management Commission Bylaws. Freet stated that the Bylaws have not been updated since 2013, after a considerable amount of research, Freet then described proposed updates that were listed in italics on the proposed bylaws. Freet stated that if members of the service board have any questions or suggestions to please reach out to her, if there is none, she will forward the proposed Bylaws to the Assistant County Attorney for review and then they would be presented at the next scheduled 911 Service Board meeting in July, 2021 to formally adopt.
- Freet then stated that if any agencies are in need of ERG books to please contact her.
- Freet then presented ESF 4 (Firefighting), ESF 9 (Search and Rescue) and ESF 13 (Public Safety and Security) for adoption. These ESF's were updated this year after transitioning to a new format. ESF 10 (Hazardous Materials) is done by the LEPC and is still in process. Freet expects ESF 10 to be completed and ready for adoption at the next regular scheduled meeting in July, 2021. Following discussion, Mayor Sparks/Bennett made a motion to approve ESF 4, ESF 9, and ESF 13, motion seconded by Mayor McAtee/Stanwood; Motion passed.
- Freet then spoke of the Lower Cedar River Watershed. Most community leaders are members of that commission that reviews water quality and flooding issues in the lower Cedar river water basin. Freet did stress the importance of attending those meetings as it covers issues that can affect our city's. Freet informed the next meeting for the Lower Cedar River Watershed will be held on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 6:30pm. Please contact Freet or Bell for more information.
- Freet then described a situation after the Derecho when the EMA office experienced equipment failure and inability to access our computers and network. This caused issue since Freet was forced to travel to and work within the Sheriff's Office to access the network since the server is located within the Sheriff's Office. This brought to light a need for redundancy and accessibility. Freet is requesting a VPN to be installed on the EMA laptop to allow remote desktop access. This would be a one-time fee to install this secure access and Freet feels like this is an important step in both creating redundancy and accessibility since it will allow access to the secure network in the event of an

emergency without needing to be in the office. Freet stated that currently if she is contacted after normal business hours for a need or request, to access the network she has to come into the office to complete. Having remote desktop access will assist in improving response and communications times for those times. After further discussion was held, Mayor Sparks/Bennett made a motion to approve the VPN for Remote Desktop access, motion seconded by Mayor McAtee/Stanwood; Motion passed.

- Freet then reiterated the updates within the EOC. Those updates include installation of speakers, an amplifier and microphones in the EOC, we are hoping to have those operational by the next scheduled meeting in July. Other updates include both a public and a private WIFI access, both are password protected. Also, the mounted tv's within the EOC are now operational.
- Freet informed that Alert Iowa is changing. The State of Iowa is no longer going to be using the WENS system. It will transition to a vendor called RAVE. While this change will be transparent to residents up front, Freet will begin steps towards that change within the next few days. Freet discussed positive attributes towards this change and the improvements to accessibility as well as the availability for cities to use in emergency situations.
- Freet also announced that there is now a River Gauge located on Rochester Bridge through the Iowa Flood Center. EMA is providing payment for the modem on that gauge for a nominal fee. That small fee does allow us to access valuable information and data pertaining to the river at that location.
- Freet informed that a Commodity Flow study will be happening at the end of April in Cedar County. Two Rivers Emergency Management was contracted through the LEPC to conduct this study that takes place typically every two years. This study will help us understand what types of hazardous materials are being transported through our county and give us a better understanding of county preparedness needs in the event of a hazardous materials emergency. Freet has been in contact with the Sheriff's Office, Iowa DOT and State Patrol regarding this study.
- Freet then disclosed dates that both herself and the Office Coordinator will be out of the office within the next quarter. Discussion was held.

Chair Bell then yielded the floor to Freet for updates on training.

- Freet shared that the training newsletter that was put on pause throughout COVID-19 will resume. And will be available at the May 2021, Fire Association Meeting. Kate will be taking over those duties of compiling training information for those newsletters.
- Freet informed that there will be a Virtual PIO course available. This will be held online May 26 and May 27th. Please reach out to obtain more information or to be included in this online course.
- Freet shared the ICS100 and ICS700 courses are available to take anytime online. It is a possibility that they may be available in person in the fall.

There were no issues presented from the public or from first responders.

Chair Bell announced that the next regular meeting of the Emergency Management Commission will take place on July 8th, 2021 at 7:00pm at 1410 Cedar Street, Tipton.

Mayor Sparks/Bennett made a motion to adjourn the meeting, motion seconded by Mayor McAtee/Stanwood; Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 7:47pm.