

Upper Uwchlan Township (UUT) Emergency Management Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes Tuesday, September 20, 2022 Held at the Upper Uwchlan Township Building

I Call to Order

Byron Nickerson called the Emergency Management Commission (EMPC) meeting to order at 6: PM.

The following members were in attendance: Byron Nickerson, Jamie Goncharoff, Lieutenant Tom Jones, Richard Ruth, Cathy Tomlinson, Steve Hirsh, Julie Hearn Nicely (remote) and Jeff Churchvara.

Also, in attendance were Kathi McGrath, EMPC Secretary; Tony Przychodzien (Tony P., Chester County Department of Emergency Services) and Betty Brosius, Marsh Harbor HOA.

III. County Report

- Tony P. presented Byron with a certificate/plaque for completion of Advanced Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator Training.
- Tony stated the new training certification program must be completed by 2027 to get recertified.
- He reported they are still looking for a Director of DES and are reorganizing the department. They have eliminated the Director of Operations position. The community outreach position is also available and has been posted on the county website.
- He said Mike Gruber, Constellation and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) have confirmed the keyhole evacuation plan for the Limerick exercise will be in September of 2023.
- Tony said he is working on ACT 147 funding and, if we need anything for the township's emergency operations center (EOC), we should submit a letter of request from the Board of Supervisors to him. The funding can be from \$1,500 up to \$4,500 depending on the need(s). Byron responded that a Base Station for the EOC would have been very helpful during the Block Party EOC activation. Tony reminded Byron that the base station must be compatible with the township's current radios.

IV. Approval of the April 2022 Meeting Minutes

Byron asked the attendees if anyone was recording the meeting. He then asked about the protocol for electronically recording meetings and saving the recordings. Jamie said there is no law that states you cannot record a meeting provided you state that it's being recorded. Jamie said it would be a good idea for Byron to get permission from the Board. Byron commented that recording the meeting would be very helpful for preparing the meeting minutes and that he would like to purchase a recording device. The unit he has in mind has voice recognition and has a software interface that converts spoken word to text (MS Word). The commission members did not object to the purchase. Kathi put on the record that she takes the meeting

minutes and has no problem continuing in that capacity. Byron stated he is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the meeting minutes and has frequently wished he had the ability to go back and review what was said. Steve Hirsh made a motion to approve the recorder purchase, Richard Ruth seconded the motion, and the motion was so passed unanimously.

V. Chairperson/EMC Report

- Byron welcomed Jeff Churchvara to the EMPC as its newly elected member. He replaced Tom Kelly who served on the commission for more than a decade.
- Byron brought up the EOC activation during the 2022 Block Party and noted that new, current, and former members of the EMPC actively participated. This is the type of active resident support model that Byron is trying to foster. That is, trained, and committed residents actively helping the township in whatever capacity they are able.
- Byron mentioned everyone should be using their new Township's ".gov" email address for all EMPC communication and asked if anyone was having any issues using the ".gov" addresses. Jamie said he was having problems connecting to his iPad, a problem that Steve had as well. Steve had reached out to Help Now, the township's IT consultant, to resolve his iPad's setting. Lieutenant Jones provided Help Now's phone number.
- Byron mentioned there was a recent incident at Hickory Park. Lieutenant Jones noted that it was an "Emotional Disorder" call. Byron said that the incident seemed to be handled well and that it should provide good feedback for emergency response issues. A few training issues include SWAT being deployed, UUT's social media person was no longer employed with the Township, the Director of Public Works was on medical leave and the next his second in charge was out of the office. Because a shelter in place order was activated, the EOP Notification and Resource Manual is critical for notifying schools and daycare facilities. It was noted that schools had issues communicating with parents. Byron commented that proactive actions that have been taken by the EMPC may have helped residents. Specifically, Shelter-in-place instructions that the EMPC included in the township's newsletter and laminated handouts that the EMPC have been passed out for years at township Block Parties that include sources of real-time information during incidents.
- The township donated \$50K to Glenmoore Fire Company's new truck and \$25K to East Brandywine for a new generator.
- **EMPC participation in the Village Concept Plan working group:** as part of the comprehensive plan each commission and Boards has a representative on the working group. Byron mentioned a few of the topics that have been discussed, and input that the EMPC's representative contributed from Chief DeMarco.
- Jeff Churchvara questioned if we have an ordinance regarding illuminated signs or billboards. Cathy said there is some type of sign ordinance. Jamie questioned how much this topic has to do with Emergency Management. Cathy noted that it's valuable information and provided background knowledge for the commission.
- **Block Party Follow Up:** Byron said there were no issues with the EOC activation. Numerous observations were shared, including concerns that people had with attending large, crowded outdoor events such as the Block Party. The police and EMPC were well prepared, police officers were spread around and visible, fire and medical resources were on hand, and situational awareness was stressed to all township employees and volunteers. A surveillance drone was deployed but had issues due to the wind. Steve commented that the Block Party would be a good opportunity for Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) involvement.
- A Struble Dam tabletop exercise will take place on Wednesday, November 2, 2022, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Coatesville Training Center. Cathy and Byron are planning to attend.

VI. Committee Reports

Community Awareness and Preparedness (Jamie Goncharoff)

- Jamie thanked Jeff for volunteering to help him create a slide presentation. He questioned Byron's email sent to himself and Tony Scheivert regarding having a consultant create the presentation for multiple purposes by the township. Byron said that his email was intended as a suggestion to Jamie, not as a statement that Tony or he would take over the presentation preparation. No consultant will be involved. Jamie reminded everyone that he wants this slide presentation to be available as a road show for HOA annual meetings, community events, etc. It should last about 15 minutes and touch on a lot of general things as an overview of what the EMPC does.

Emergency Services Committee (Kevin Cook)

- Kevin was not present for the meeting, Byron read his report.
- UAC Substation: Kevin, Chief DeMarco and Byron met with the Uwchlan Ambulance Corps (UAC) and developed a list of issues associated with having an UAC satellite facility at Milford Road. The property looks like a good possibility. Cathy questioned Lieutenant Jones about what the response time is from Milford Road to North Reeds Road. He said it's about 10 minutes with lights and sirens. Police have cars positioned in sectors which could have shorter times depending on traffic.
- Byron mentioned the new 55+ community being constructed on Milford Road and the Assisted Living Facility coming soon to Upper Uwchlan at the junction of Graphite Mine and Byers Roads.
- A brief discussion was had regarding the possible need for a fire services substation at the Milford Road facility as well.
- Byron updated the commission on the 2023 Emergency Services Study. He said he does not feel we should move forward with an update at this time given the near-term deadline for input to the Comprehensive Plan. Jamie suggested paying an expert to do the update.

Pipeline Committee (Steve Hirsh)

- The Cleanup of the Marsh Creek Lake drilling fluid release work is completed - two months behind schedule.
- Steve attended a pipeline incident response drill with Corporal Sherman in Exton. He said the drill involved a motor vehicle operator that hit and destroyed a pipeline structure. The pipeline segment needed to be isolated. Numerous people from West Whiteland were observed to be in attendance. The pipeline maintenance and repair crews from Marcus Hook did an outstanding job.

Steve commented that he completed a 12-week CERT Training Course and is now fully certified. Jamie and Byron mentioned that they also completed CERT training years ago. Steve noted that there may not be enough first responders available to handle some large-scale emergencies. We need to have neighbors willing and trained to help neighbors. Cathy asked if there was scheduling flexibility for the CERT training program. The answer was no, but that Joe Sciandra will be speaking at an upcoming EMPC meeting and can be asked that question. The CERT certification program must meet the specifications of the County and State. There was agreement among members that the program may be too stringent if it has so few people attend and graduate. It might be better to have more people trained to handle emergency situations and that multiple levels could solve the problem.

Flooding Issues (Cathy Tomlinson)

- Cathy has nothing to report.
- Byron said he reached out to a “smart” signage vendor, Electec. They referred him to a contractor in West Chester. He left two messages with the vendor and was eventually told that a representative would contact him. This has not happened.
- Tony P said there is federal grant money available for flood mitigation and safety. The deadline to apply is September 30th and it is a national competition. Cathy said the North Reeds Road bridge is a county bridge. Tony P. stated that the bridge would be included in the County’s submission.

VI. Old Business

PEMA EOC site visit: Chief, Byron, Steve and Kathi visited to the State Emergency Operation Center. Byron was struck by the size, scale, and organization of the EOC. One takeaway was the need for an IT person in the EOC. At the state level they are constantly helping with password resets, computer issues and internet management, which is in an emergency. IT/communication has been the primary issue in the past during Limerick exercises.

VII. New Business

- EMPC 2022-2023 objective: Budget for 2023. Byron will be including money for training, so feel free to. He suggested we do a road trip to the Coast Guard who typically responds to an incident when helicopter support is required.
- Byron said to let him know if anyone has any objectives for 2022-2023.
- Open Discussion: Byron asked the commission members to what length should UUT go to protect and care for our citizens and businesses during an incident. Maintenance of essential service is critical, e.g., police, fire, and EMS.
- Betty Broscius from Marsh Harbor was in attendance. She wanted to know if the emergency access easement from 1980 could be relocated. Stormwater management actions need to be implemented in the general vicinity of township easements. Jamie suggested she work with the township and civil engineer to look at the problems and come up with a list of resolution or get the township to agree to move the access road. Byron said he would get with Betty, walk the township access road, and discuss township plans for emergency egress to Twin Pines Road in the unlikely event that Park Road must be shut down.

VII. Round Table

No. contributions from committee members.

X. Notable Action Items

- Cathy gets involved with township’s Environmental Advisory Council.
- Jamie and Jeff will get together to work on the slide presentation.
- Byron will meet with Betty (Marsh Harbor).
- Byron will request a base station via ACT 147 grant money from ChesCo DES.
- Byron will check into the Phillips meeting recorder

Cathy made a motion to end the meeting at 9:01 PM and Richard Ruth seconded the motion. All members were enthusiastically in favor of the motion. There were no dissenting votes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathi McGrath
EMPC Secretary