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Linn County Emergency Management Commission

MINUTES

Linn County Emergency Management Commission Meeting
 Tuesday, February 20, 2024 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Meeting called to order at 5:06 p.m.

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MEMBER JURISDICTION	Member (Per Code of IA 29c - mayor, supervisor, sheriff)	Designated Alternate (member's representative excluding budget issues)
Alburnett	Bethany Sarazin	
Bertram		
Cedar Rapids	Ann Poe	Greg Smith
Center Point		
Central City	Don Gray	
Coggon	Reenie Montgomery	
Ely		
Fairfax	JoAnn Beer	Lynn Miller
Hiawatha	Steve Dodson	
Lisbon		
Marion		Tom Fagan
Mt. Vernon	Tom Wieseler	
Palo	Angie Brekke	
Prairieburg		
Robins	Mike Foley	
Sheriff	Brian Gardner	Doug Riniker
Springville		
Supervisor	Louis Zumbach	
Walker		
Walford	Todd Gibbs	




EMA Staff:

BJ Dvorak
Dawn Nelson
Tom Ulrich
Brad Ransford

Guests Present:

Daniel Hoffmann - CERT

1. **Roll Call** – Chair – Roll call was taken and a quorum of elected officials was present. Other non-elected representatives were also in attendance.
2. **Approve Agenda** – Chair – **Motion by Mt. Vernon second by Coggon. Motion carried.**
3. **Public Comments** – Agenda Related – None.
4. **Invited Guests/Speakers/Presentations/Awards** – None.
5. **Minutes – Approval Regular Meeting (January 16, 2024) – Motion by Cedar Rapids-Poe second by Central City. Motion carried.**
6. **Business (Discussion and action may be taken on any of the following)**
 - 6.1. FY-2025 Proposed Budget & FY-2024 Proposed Budget Amendment overview presentation – Coordinator – BJ Dvorak presented a power point presentation (see power point). Items noted:
 - Current staff: BJ Dvorak, Dawn Nelson, Tom Ulrich, Brad Ransford, Heather Tripp
 - Karen Kawala’s Resiliency Coordinator position was approved at the January 16, 2024 Emergency Management Commission meeting
 - Challenges next three (3) - five (5) years (Strategic Plan based):
 - Acquisition of new facilities for EMA and response vehicles (in progress)
 - Siren system integration (ongoing)
 - Seek EMAP accreditation
 - FY25 budget guidelines have been followed except for an unavoidable increase to insurance of \$26,213
 - Wage increases:
 - Non-bargaining unit employees 3%
 - Bargaining unit employees 3.5% (met 2/14/24 for wage opener for years four (4) & five (5))
 - Salary & Benefits for five (5) current staff \$23,474
 - Salary & Benefits for Resiliency position \$71,685
 - Siren system:
 - Maintenance contract \$175,200 annually (B & R Enterprises 1/4/2022 – 1/4/2025)
 - Insurance \$24,722 (Nelson & Dvorak met w/Accel Group – this is for Sirens only – doesn’t include siren spare parts, equipment & siren vehicles/van & bucket truck)

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- Siren shop/warehouse moved to Hwy 13 location
 - Siren batteries \$25,000 (sirens are solar powered)
- Insurance:
 - ICAP is insurance carrier
 - Total premium for all insurance \$71,662 (does not include recent changes-added light tower trailer & 6" pump (State assets housed at LC EMA & we insure))
 - Old Republic is new work comp carrier (previously Technology Ins) premium \$10,224 (included in above total)
- Revenues:
 - Linn County allocation - EMA and HazMat
 - EMPG Grant (capped at \$39,000 for Linn County)
 - HMEP Grant
 - HSGP Grant (new grant - FEMA funded & addresses terrorism preparedness)
 - HazMat retainers (eight counties)
 - HazMat spill response
 - Region 6 LEPC/HazMat training
- Projects:
 - HSGP Grant (Multi threat suits purchased FY24)
 - EMPG Grant FY24
 - purchased enclosed trailer for CERT Team
 - video server upgraded (security cameras)
 - upgrading network switches at EMA
- Fund balance / Reserve fund balance (Emergency / Disaster related):
 - Current fund balance \$441,258.44 (FYE23)
 - Estimated fund balance \$284,812 (FYE24)
 - Reserve fund balance Commission directed 50K emergency related (historical)
 - Reserve fund balance Commission directed 90K disaster related (historical)
 - Nelson and Dvorak have discussed need to increase reserve limits due to budget growth
 - Fund balance projects allowed (over required reserve balance)
 - Mobile computers/docking stations in three (3) EMA vehicles
 - EMA building generator radiator replacement
 - Outdoor warning siren controller replacement – two (2)
 - Additional storage racks – EMA warehouse
 - Rental equipment – EMA warehouse move
- FY24 Amendment - Expenditures \$211,240 (published in Gazette)
- FY25 Expenditures and Revenues \$1,267,796 (published in Gazette)
 - Linn County allocation \$1,138,236 total



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- EMA \$1,103,000
- HazMat \$35,236

- 6.2. Discussion and Approval of Tentative Wage Agreement Between AFSCME Local 231 and Linn County Emergency Management Commission for Contract Modification of Wages for FY25 and FY26 – Coordinator – BJ Dvorak reported the bargaining unit, employer and Linn County representatives met on February 14th. The tentative agreement was signed (see attached in packet). **Motion by Cedar Rapids-Poe second by Walford to approve. Motion carried.** Dvorak will advise HR Director Powell of Commission approval.
- 6.3. Public Hearing for FY2024 EMA Budget Amendment – Chair – **Motion by Cedar Rapids-Poe second by Coggon to open public hearing at 5:25 p.m. Motion carried.** Gardner noted he has proof of publication and it was included in the Commission packet for the meeting tonight, as well. Adds \$211,240 to original certified budget of \$1,124,614 for new expenditure total of \$1,335,854. **Motion by Fairfax second by Cedar Rapids-Poe to close public hearing at 5:27 p.m. Motion carried.**
- 6.4. Motion to Adopt the Amendment for the FY2024 EMA Budget – Chair – **Motion by Hiawatha second by Central City to approve FY24 Budget Amendment of \$211,240. Motion carried.**
- 6.5. Public Hearing for Proposed FY2025 EMA Budget – Chair - **Motion by Ely second by Cedar Rapids-Poe to open public hearing at 5:28 p.m. Motion carried.** Gardner noted he has proof of publication in Gazette for \$1,267,796. **Motion by Palo second by Mt. Vernon to close public hearing at 5:30 p.m. Motion carried.**
- 6.6. Motion to Adopt the Proposed FY2025 EMA Budget – Chair - **Motion by Cedar Rapids-Poe second by Walford to approve FY25 Budget of \$1,267,796. Motion carried.**
- 6.7. Discussion on Updates to the Linn County Emergency Management Commission’s Personnel Policies and Procedures for Emergency Management Employees - Coordinator/Chair – BJ Dvorak stated the policy manual hasn’t been updated since April 2019. He has been reviewing it for changes and intends to send it out for review so we can take action on it at the April Commission meeting. The cell phone policy included in it has not been updated since 2009 and is outdated and references old information. Staff receive a monthly allowance and in more recent years we have been following the Linn County Cell Phone Policy. Dvorak noted the range of reimbursements received, since July 2020. Employees have received anywhere between \$50-\$80 monthly. In July 2023, amounts of \$70 and \$80 were submitted, which were the same as in 2022 and the Linn County Auditor’s Office changed and lowered all of them. Dvorak is proposing updating the policy so all staff receive the same reimbursement amount of \$80 a month. Staff are all utilizing their phones 24 hours a day and he’d like it to be fair for all staff. Col. Doug Riniker said there is a formula the auditor’s office uses and employees supply a cover sheet of their bill to be reviewed by the auditor’s office to make sure reimbursements are going to the employee’s phone and not other phones which



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may be included on the bill. Chair Brian Gardner suggested we get a copy of the County's policy and adopt it. Dawn Nelson stated the auditor's office had provided her with information as to how the reimbursements are calculated and she and the auditor's office did come up with the same reimbursement amounts for staff, once that was communicated. She reiterated what Dvorak had stated that the intent was to keep all staff at the same reimbursement amount. Each cellular carrier invoice is different in how they show charges. Nelson noted there is no reimbursement for phones, chargers or other equipment. The county policy allows up to \$80 reimbursement. Recommendation and consensus was to adopt the Linn County Cell Phone Policy so EMA's mirrors theirs. This will be sent out for review and approval at the April Commission meeting and will include all revisions in the policy.

6.8. Other Commission Related Items Not Listed on Agenda for Discussion – Coordinator/Chair – Brian Gardner stated he was unable to attend the January Commission meeting due to his attendance at another meeting. The minutes reflect Karen Kawala's reassignment from under the Board of Supervisors to EMA, as the Resiliency Coordinator. Gardner also agrees that this makes sense. He and Supervisors Zumbach and Running-Marquardt had a conversation before BJ Dvorak was approached, regarding this. The issue that occurred at the January meeting is to reclassify her to align with the other Emergency Management Specialists. So change her from Resiliency Coordinator to Emergency Management Specialist with her area of expertise being Resiliency. Dvorak brought this up to Gardner and Gardner contacted HR Director Lisa Powell and inquired how this would work. The problem is before the EMA staff unionized, the Emergency Management Commission, as the governing body, had the ability to do whatever they wanted to do with the job classification, titles and duties. They each had a specific job title and classification and now they all have the same general Emergency Management Specialist title. Because they are unionized, now, there is a process that has to take place with the AFSCME Union and with HR, even though we are the governing body, we can't just change this because it has already been established and approved within the AFSCME Bargaining Unit, LC HR and their labor attorneys. There is a process that can take place, but it isn't something we can change in one meeting. Gardner is suggesting putting this on hold, reaching back out to Lisa Powell and asking how this process works. Then contact the union to go through the process to change the Resiliency Coordinator classification to Emergency Management Specialist classification. Dvorak and/or Gardner can reach out to Lisa Powell and bring it back at the next meeting and see which direction we are going to head.



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7. **Public Comments (Non-agenda related)** – Chair – Daniel Hoffmann with Linn County CERT gave a reminder that today is the second anniversary of the first CERT activation; helping with the shelter after the Geneva Tower fire. Hoffmann also gave a reminder of the annual Storm Spotter Training on Saturday, March 23rd. This is at St. Marks Church, with the National Weather Service. This was sent out previously. Ann Poe requested the information and inquired how the information is more broadly shared with the public. She thinks it's a great program and would like to see it more broadly accepted and used. Hoffmann noted The National Weather Service in the Quad Cities is sharing the information and Hoffmann shared it with Dawn Nelson and Brad Ransford, who sent it out. Hoffmann also shared it with amateur radio groups and TV and radio groups, as well. EMA will send it out, again. Poe stated she will send it to their PR professional with the City of Cedar Rapids, once she receives it, and he can share it out. It's an opportunity for citizens to be engaged and more might be if they knew about it.

8. **Adjournment** – Chair – **Meeting declared adjourned by Chair Gardner at 5:49 p.m.**



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