**Regional Parish OHSEP Director’s Subcommittee Monthly Meeting**

Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 10:00 AM

Over Watch Meeting Room

7667 Independence Blvd.

Baton Rouge, LA 70806

**ATTENDEES**

Melton Gaspard, Todd Derrick, Lennie Lafleur, Dick Gremillion, Neal Brown, Rodger McConnell, Sandra Gaspard, Lee John, Jared Maze, Todd Smith, Meg Dejean, Ashley Beetz, Terry Guidry, Kenneth Moore, Lynn Browning, Jason Tastet, Catesha Smith, Rubby Douglas, Robert Jump, Veronica Sizer, Zephie Douglas, Amy Michiels, Dawson Primes, Mike Steele, Collin Arnold, Clay Rives, Thomas Mule, Euclid Talley, Rubby Douglas, Jacques Thibodeaux, Matthew McKey

**Call to Order /Welcome**

Dawson Primes called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM. Dawson completed the roll call and a quorum was established. Dawson welcomed the group.

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| **Regions** | **Directors** | **Meeting Designee** | **Present** | **Absent** |
| Region One | Collin Arnold |  | P |  |
| Region Two | Clay Rives |  | P |  |
| Region Three | Earl Eues | Jason Tastet | P |  |
| Region Four | Terry Guidry |  | P |  |
| Region Five | Dick Gremillion |  | P |  |
| Region Six | Kenneth Moore |  | P |  |
| Region Seven | Robert Jump |  | P |  |
| Region Eight | Roger McConnell |  | P |  |
| Region Nine | Dawson Primes |  | P |  |
| GOHSEP Director | Jacques Thibodeaux |  | P |  |

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES from October 2023**

**Motion by**: Clay Rives

**Seconded by**: Terry Guidry

There were no oppositions. 2023 minutes were approved.

**GOHSEP UPDATES / REPORTS**

Jacques Thibodeaux, Director

GOHSEP Updates

* Jacques would like to take a new approach to GOHSEP with more OEP and municipality involvement. There will be expansion of the relationship with LEPA. This will give the OEP directors a forum to voice their needs. Jacques is looking forward to establishing a personal touch with all of the OEP directors.
* A 100 day plan will go to every OEP Director and every GOHSEP employee.
* All of the Assistant Deputy Director titles will change to reflect more of a director role.
* Chris Guilbeaux is currently the Executive Director of LEPA and will be on the GOHSEP organizational chart as a confidential assistant to Jacques.
* Jacques’s phone number is 504-915-3120 and email is [Jacques.thibodeaux@la.gov](mailto:Jacques.thibodeaux@la.gov)

Organizational Changes

* Neal Fudge is the Deputy Director, not Chief of Staff, staff will be handled under their assistant deputy directors. He has the authority to make a decision in the event Jacques is not present.
* Lynn Browning is the Assistant Director of Public Assistance. Lynn has a vacant executive officer position, which Lynn will fill.
* Sandra Gaspard is the Assistant Director of Hazard Mitigation. Sandy will find an executive officer.
* Euclid Talley is the Assistant Director of Security and Interoperability. Thomas Mule’ is the executive officer.
* Extended an offer for Assistant Director of Grants and Administration and an executive officer designated.
* Assistant Director of Emergency Management is vacant. Primary goal is to find someone who either has experience as an OEP director, assistant OEP director, or is well known by OEP directors. Once filled, there will be an executive officer position created.
* Dee Ball will be the Director- Regional Support Operations. The three Area Managers will be the Area Directors. Regional coordinators remaining.
  + Regional aspect will grow. The Governor wants to take economic development as well as some additional executive branch and form a regional concept. The intent is to grow the regional staff to have more of a field output than we do a headquarters output.
  + All regional staff will be able to take vehicles from houses.
* Veronica Sizer is now Chief Executive Counsel and GOHSEP will expand legal capabilities to be able to answer questions legislatively.
* All assistant directors are going to be required to visit every OEP director once a year. They will also have a vehicle. The end goal is to make this whole organization more focused on OEP directors and municipalities.
* The three priorities in the vision and the mission:
  + We need to be the operational emergency arm
  + We need to move money faster through the system for the OEP directors
  + Continuous improvement

**Public Assistance Updates**

Lynn Browning, Asst. Director Public Assistance

* Trying to reduce administrative burden on time extensions for big disasters (Laura, Ida).
* PA is going to extend permanent work, going to try to do a blanket extension so that you do not have to request project by project. Only have the ability to extend Laura for another six months, Ida can be extended through February 2025.
* A big focus will be on remaining permanent work projects that have not been obligated by FEMA for Laura and Ida. Laura has had considerable progress, but it is not quite there. Ida is more of the heavy lift. There has been a change in the FEMA management structure overseeing Ida. If you have projects that have been at a stalemate or are struggling to move forward, please let Lynn know.
* Every year PA has to present to FEMA their strategic plan for closeout. For 2024:
  + Rita is close. 20 projects remaining.
  + FEMA has a high level of interest to close out Gustav.
  + EM for Sally
  + DR-4228 Severe Storms and Flooding Event
  + DR-4439 Ruston Tornados
  + Hurricane Barry
  + DR-4462 Flooding Event
* 7 disasters on their radar to close out for 2024.

**Hazard Mitigation Updates**

Sandra Dugas-Gaspard, Asst. Director, Hazard Mitigation Assistance

* There are typically three programs that HM implements, right now that is at six due to some of FEMA’s new programs and initiatives.
* Hazard Mitigation Grant Program- all recent application periods for recent disasters are now closed with Ida being closed in November.
* FY 2022 FMA and BRIC grants- all of those identified for further review are still under review with FEMA, but HM anticipates starting to see some awards pretty quickly.
* FY 2023 FMA and BRIC Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) were released in October. Those applications are due to GOHSEP January 21st.
* FMA Swift FY 2022- all sub grants have been awarded for a total of approximately $40 million. HM working with OCD to provide non-federal funds to match homeowner grants. Still working through the executive of the CEA for that.
* FMA Swift FY 2023 NOFO released in November but because it requires a major flood declaration prior to the end of May of this year, we are not eligible.
* STORM revolving loan fund- for the first year we were awarded $6.9 million, but FEMA has not yet released that award package, so we do not have the funds yet and do not know what the terms look like.
* FY 2024 STORM NOFO came out for $150 million competitively, available nationwide with applications due April 30th.
* HMPG Post fire due at the end of March with a total of $3.7 million available to Vernon, Beauregard, and Rapides.

**Operations Updates**

Melton Gaspard,

* Severe weather event 1/08/2024. Street flooding and minor damages here and there. Damage.la.gov was stood up.
* Listserv being updated with new parish directors, assistant directors, parish presidents, sheriffs, ESF leads, UCG staff etc. Need to update as soon as possible. RCs have started process for parishes and have identified new leadership.
* Radiological department is going to start doing dosimeter calibrations, trying to get on a new schedule where they are all done prior to hurricane season.
* HB Resolution 198 where Sheriff’s Office had capability to input WebEOCrequests survey was sent out a couple of weeks ago. GOHSEP feedback was due this week. 60 people filled out between OEPs and Sheriff’s Offices. There were eight questions on the survey with the last question “Should the State revise the current authorization given to the OHSEP Director or his designee as the only person able to submit WebEOC resource to also allow authorization of the Sheriff, when the Sheriff is not the designated OHSEP Director to submit WebEOC requests directly to GOHSEP during a declared emergency?”
  + 71.6% said NO it should stay the same.
  + Unsure of where this will go.
* New WebEOC request board being worked on. Testing internally this week. We need to start training on this new board, and hoping to go live prior to hurricane season and use it for the statewide exercise for practice.
  + New board is an Amazon ordering system that tracks assets from point A to point B. The delivery driver can take a picture of the asset delivered and put it into WebEOC request.
* Mel is back from surgery; appreciates everyone reaching out to Garrett (Operations Branch Manager), and you can continue to reach out to Garrett.

**Preparedness Updates**

Rubby Douglas, Section Chief

* Reviewing nursing home plans. If you are having issues with Monday.com, LDH is handling those issues.
* Preparing some technical review support for parish directors to make sure parish EOPs are helpful.
* Putting together technical assistance for use during disasters so that all information is available to respond.
* Provide training on SPR/THIRA for regional coordinators and OEPs. Helpful to provide historical data on disasters. What do you need to know about the impacts to better position resources?
* There are vacancies in preparedness.
* Act 526 provided that elected officials training is required to be offered. This training is available online but can be offered in person when requested. Link to online training: <http://gohsep.la.gov/EMTP>
* UCG exercise by the post-naval academy slated for March.
* Statewide exercise is called Cajun Kaleidoscope. If parishes would like to play, Rubby wants to know what you are testing.
* Region 2 full scale exercise for river event
* Want to build investment in local colleges and universities to provide after action for wildfires, have three proposals pending
* Wildfire Urban Interfacing, if you are interested please let Rubby know
* O0305 All Hazards Incident Management Training, have built up a cadre of instructors for this course to include Matt Hammons, Rubby Douglas, Baton Rouge FD, St. George FD, and Red Cross individuals. Helps us get closer to National Qualification Standards (NQS). NQS allows for requests for specific resource types.
* Important for us to give information to the public about home fire safety. State Fire Marshall’s Office hosting a training on January 24th at 1200. Link to register: <https://bit.ly/EMDAC-FireSafety>
* RFP has been awarded for Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshops, unsure of status from state purchasing, but Rubby’s team will provide this support.
* Boomerang Exercise last year was focused on recovery support, how to maximize plans for first responder lodging and pre-designated FEMA sites.
* ESF branch planning to align with the emergency operations plan.
* RFP for disability assessment coordination going out soon.
* Pre-planning for winter weather next week.
* LEPA conference coming up in May. If you have ideas for workshops please submit your proposals.

**Homeland Security & Interoperability Updates**

Euclid Talley, Assistant Director Security and Interoperability

* Branches within the division include critical infrastructure, school safety, cybersecurity, interoperability, communications, and criminal intelligence through the Fusion Center.
* Still looking at organization chart, two standing legislative directives to build out cybersecurity and school safety.
  + Hoping to have School Safety Director identified as early as this week. From there start the build out and hiring process of 11 additional team members.
  + Matt McKey will be hiring five people for cybersecurity.
* Jacie Maples is the go to for critical infrastructure protection; working on building out the state critical infrastructure list, and working on building out special events list that has increased over 30%. This should affect SHSP directly, the new directive from DHS is that we will get credit for those special events per capita population. Puts us from 20 to number 2 or 3 nationwide.
* Need to plan a partners meeting with the Fusion Center, the new LSP Superintendent will likely set the date. Once date is set, Euclid would like to send out a survey on criminal intelligence. Some Sheriff’s Associations by region are doing regional threat assessments, but not all. Euclid would like to help build this out.
* Zero visibility on threats in schools; principals are not rewarded by sharing threats when they occur, would like to change this in the next legislation.

**Cybersecurity, Matt McKey**

* Closed out 2023 with 22 ESF-17 responses. Over half were local government entities primarily characterized as advanced persistent threats. Other primary targets have been education entities and public safety entities.
* Louisiana Cyber Assurance Program and Plan
  + Working on plan, primary objective is to get local feedback. Workshops have been occurring regionally. Three workshops left as of today for the next 3 Thursdays. Feedback gathered at these meetings will be presented to planning committee and will be used to direct funds at actual needs of locals.
* Three other programs include an assessment program, issuance of software licenses for endpoint detection and response, and the Cyber Threat Analytics Center.
  + Requests for 304 entities to receive EDR software, 37 have been issued licenses
  + 372 have requested assessments; only gotten through pilot phase of three so far, and they have not received reports. Intent is to get through all 372 before end of calendar year.
  + This is primarily funded through the State and Local Cybersecurity Program. $3.6 million received for FY22, and $8.4 received for FY23, FY23 funding has not been allocated to projects yet pending regional workshops being completed. There will be two subsequent grant years with less funding as the grant will taper off. Other funding sources are SHSP and legislative session funding.
* Training is needed across the state to reduce the likelihood of cyber-attacks. Would like to go to each region and provide trainings and workshops on cybersecurity and continuity of operations planning.
* Question posed by Clay Rives concerning Cyber Incident declarations and will the state declaration stay in place. There have already been conversations about moving away from the monthly declaration, and put it through the cyber crimes unit where it will be similar to a HAZMAT incident where LSP can respond without a declaration

**Regional OHSEP Directors Updates**

* Updates were given by the Regional Directors

**Adjourn**

Motion by: Clay Rives

Seconded by: Collin Arnold

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM