

**Minutes of the
Lower Connecticut River Valley Selectmen's Association
July 14, 2004**

Attendance:

Chester:	Martin Heft
Clinton:	
Deep River:	
Essex:	Phil Miller
Killingworth:	David Denvir
Lyme:	
Old Lyme:	Tim Griswold
Old Saybrook:	Mike Pace
Westbrook:	Tony Palermo
Legislators:	Betty Wagner on behalf of Rep. Rob Simmons
Guests:	Charles Beck and Julie Bisi from the Office of Emergency Management, Meg Hooper, Public Health Services Manager for the State of Connecticut
CRERPA:	Amy Cabaniss, J.H. Torrance Downes, Wini Olson

I. Lower Connecticut Valley Selectmen's Association

A. Minutes

Tony Palermo moved that the minutes of the June 9 meeting be approved as circulated. The motion was seconded by Martin Heft and was unanimously approved.

B. Guests

Chairman Mike Pace introduced Chuck Beck and Julie Bisi of the Office of Emergency Management and Meg Hooper from the Office of Planning, Communication and Workforce Development of the State Department of Public Health.

Chuck Beck stressed that an emergency situation is not a time to exchange business cards. It is important for the responsible people in various parts of the state to get to know one another and become comfortable with their interactive assignments.

Mr. Beck explained that FEMA has an "all hazard format" that has been assigned to focus on terrorism. The plans are aimed at the county level of government. Since New England states no longer have county government, the states decided to take all of the money and plan at the state level. FEMA allows only 25% to go to the state. 75% must go to "less than state" entities. After due deliberation, the RPOs agreed upon a base line plus per capita formula for the distribution of planning funds.

The Military Department (Emergency Management) had been preparing plans using functional annexes. Hazard specific plans emerged. The two methods were added to the general plan as Supplement 1 and Supplement 2.

At the same time, the Public Health Department developed a collection of Emergency Operations Plans. Since Public Health has a role to play in all emergencies, the departments agreed to work together. This point, both departments recognize the same ten Preparedness Planning Regions. Details are available on the OEM Website. Regional Planning Organizations are part of the continual planning process.

Torrance Downes noted that CRERPA had delegated the planning responsibilities to Bruce Watrous and Joel Severance.

Chairman Pace expressed concern about receiving contradicting communications, including a recent Memorandum of Understanding. He noted that he is not quite comfortable with the structure of the program beyond Old Saybrook. He met recently with Thad King and Bill Cox of the Chatham Health District. Chairman Pace wants to determine what the redundancy is. He asked for help in scheduling a meeting at the Pavilion in Old Saybrook in mid-August. He suggested that each Selectman bring his Emergency Management Director, Health Director and other key personnel.

CRERPA and Chatham Health District will help coordinate the meeting.

Ms. Hooper warned that federal funding will soon evaporate in CT. This has been declared a low risk state while both New York and Massachusetts remain classified high risk and will continue to be funded.

Tim Griswold mentioned that the Lymes are assigned to both Ledge Light and Middlesex for different situations.

Chairman Pace stressed the need for a coherent policy.

Joel Severance mentioned that the Emergency Managers Association seems to be working well.

Chuck Beck stressed that no one can legally give up responsibility or command for his town. There must be unified command and coordination. "All egos must be check at the door."

Ms. Hooper noted that in the case of bio-terrorism, there is usually no specific "scene".

Bruce Watrous reviewed that it is a matter of establishing a base. The plans started with the individual towns. Coordination is the next step. At the very beginning, the Selectmen chose to appoint themselves as the coordinating council for the region. Sharing equipment and training is another step.

Chuck Beck noted that plans on a shelf are useless. Plans must be constantly rehearsed.

David Denvir asked that communication protocol be established.

Chairman Pace repeated that Thad King will contact Torrance and Joel for a list of people and possible dates for the August meeting. He asked Betty Wagner to attend.

C. Other Business

1. DCF Grant

Chairman Pace reported that he received notice from DCF on July 5 that the \$48,000 grant that was awarded will not be paid. He explained that \$15,000 was designated for Old Lyme, \$15,000 for Chester, Deep River and Essex, and \$18,000 for the Old Saybrook parent support services. Old Saybrook will attempt to fund the program locally and will reapply for another grant.

2. HHW

Amy Cabaniss reported that the Regional Household Hazardous Waste Facility is operational and has served an average of 100 households per collection.

The ribbon cutting was well attended.

Help is needed for volunteer recruitment.

Packets of brochures were distributed.

Boaters wheels were distributed.

The CRRA transfer agreement is in progress. Details have to be resolved with Essex.

3. Pump out

Joel Severance reported that the pump out boat is operating at capacity. Seven day service has been requested. The money for the new boat is available.

More paper work is needed.

4. Harbor Management

Joel Severance reported that Jeff Going of Essex and Ross Byrne of Old Saybrook have been appointed to serve as co-chairmen of the new committee to create standards for the evaluation of docks. Other towns in the Gateway Region are participating. Funding being sought to coordinate the Chester plan, the CRERPA dock study and the state model. Chairman Pace asked who will actually do it.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy C. Griswold,
Secretary