

MEETING NOTES

Attendees

In-Person

Kate Gibson, Deputy Director, GWRC
Michael Zehner, Environmental Programs Director, The Berkley Group
Luke Peters, Environmental Planner, The Berkley Group
Alexa Boggs, Disaster Response and Recovery Officer, VDEM
Jack McGovern, Battalion Chief, City of Fredericksburg
Tyler Gelles, Senior Stormwater Manager, City of Fredericksburg
Matthew Decatur, Long Range Planner, Spotsylvania County
Jacob Pastwik, Long Range Planner, Spotsylvania County

Online

Lindsay Edwards, Environmental Planner, The Berkley Group
Nadya Syazsa, Intern, The Berkley Group
Liz Adams, All Hazards Planner, VDEM
Colin Noyes, All Hazards Planner, VDEM
Jason R. Loftus, Fire-EMS Chief, Caroline County
Steve Lynd, Battalion Chief/Deputy Emergency Manager, King George County
Monique Dina, Emergency Management Planner, King George County
Matthew Embrey, Division Chief, EM & Logistics, Spotsylvania County

Not in Attendance

Allyson Finchum, Town Manager, Town of Bowling Green and Town of Port Royal
Steven L. Nelson, Director, Emergency Management, Rappahannock Tribe
Jay Cullinan, Fire Chief, Spotsylvania County
Roger Sutherland, Assistant Chief, Stafford County

Welcome & Introductions

Kate Gibson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Michael Zehner opened the meeting and coordinated introductions.

Project Overview and Schedule

The Project Management Team discussed the intent and goals of the Plan update, as well as minimum requirements for the update.

The Project Management Team discussed the project timeline, including expectations for the completion of certain tasks, scheduling of meetings, and the receipt of materials, especially drafts of the Plan.

Review, Evaluation, and Assessment of Existing Plan

The Project Management Team discussed the existing plan, including what aspects may be improved upon. Discussion focused on and covered the following:

- Shared mitigation strategies that might benefit the region
- Coordination on the implementation and management of the Plan, aspects that the Project Management Team would like to see addressed in the Plan update.
- 2020 Census may change from expectations due to effects of the COVID-19 pandemic
- How to address technological and man-made hazards? Possible circumstances to address could include civil unrest, political hotspot areas, cybersecurity threats
- Updating occurrences of storm and other hazard events in the region
- Should there be consideration of strategies to proactively get ahead of and address impacts associated with private development?
 - Advocate for certain elements in new and future development (include private development; e.g., supermarkets, shipping companies) that would reduce hazard risks, particularly for critical infrastructure;
- Updating new land-use policies and/or regional mitigation strategies (at least 2 for each hazard); and consider the cascading effects of hazards
- Integrate strategies of existing environmental programs (e.g., flooding mitigation activities) to those included in the Plan
 - *Kate Gibson*: There are currently numerous strategies tied to flooding that are related to other activities done by GWRC. It is significant to ensure the annual scopes of work for environmental programs help process HMP strategies
- Update clarity, organization, and readability of document, possibly begin with community-specific information prior to the rationale;

- List possible community-specific capabilities in times of disasters (e.g., what type of shelters may be available? what are some shared services between localities?); They are difficult to find in the current Plan
- Section 8 – add 8.6 Annual Training and Exercise Tabletop Plan
- Implementation plan:
 - *Spotsylvania County* – planning department, IT, and other groups work together to implement recommendations
 - *Kate Gibson*: Possibly create a working group together and discuss once a year to report on the implementation progress
 - While localities have individually worked on their items, there hasn't been a concerted regional effort on GWRC's part – possibly tie into other grants/strategies to help with this

Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

Berkley Group Staff introduced the HIRA, the hazards currently covered and additional hazards that the Project Management Team may wish to consider, as well as the methodology for assessing risk and vulnerability:

- Using mixture of FEMA National Risk Index and other substantial hazard-specific data; which would somewhat change the format of HIRA
 - Thunderstorm >> Lightning Events + Strong Wind
 - Winter Storms and Nor'easters >> Winter Weather events
 - Non-Rotational Winds >> Hurricanes, Tropical Storms
 - Tornadoes – remain separate
 - Other hazards possibly to include (per FEMA instructions):
 - Pandemic + Infectious Diseases
 - Invasive Species
 - Radon Exposure
 - Climate Change
 - Additional technological hazards – cyberattacks, biohazards, terrorist-related attacks, power plant explosions
- GWRC – no HAZUS data is supported; other methodologies – e.g., NRI, helps identify vulnerable communities and hazard risk (all of which are planned to be mapped using GIS)
 - Annual frequency
 - Population equivalence
 - Property damage
 - Agricultural damage
 - COVID-19 Data:
 - Infection rates

- Vaccination rates
- COVID-19 Clinics/Test-Sites
- Building footprints – to identify buildings located in the 100- or even 500-year floodplain

Project Management Team discussion included the following:

- Consider localities' EOPs and Recovery Plan – local-based documents should be referenced in the overall Plan
 - Whereas the current Plan addressed likelihood and pre-mitigation activities
 - Include also Dam Emergency Action Plan
 - Tabletop Exercise – to test if EOPs work as intended
- Create a working inventory of local plans into the HMP update
- Spotsylvania County – current issues with nutrient and sun impacted waters resulting in harmful algae blooms and toxic waters which raises concerns for wildlife and recreation – considered to be manmade hazard
- Equitable outcomes – focus on mitigation strategies to aid more vulnerable communities, particularly those located on the coasts
- Colin Noyes: Infrastructure, particularly aging ones – bridges, water facilities (e.g., pump stations), dams – should be addressed as they significantly impact local communities
 - DCR has database of dams in the region
 - Impoundment vs. dam – different hazard level; local EM should have data on this
 - Mitigation strategy – map dams locally

Public Engagement/Education Plan

Project Management Team discussion focused on the following to support public engagement and education:

- Create working inventory of local resources and contacts for public engagement:
 - Include local webpages/sites; newsletters; communication staff and social media
 - Attach images of hazards to Plan – include captions, sources (possibly local news outlets, social media, etc.)
 - Improve education on relevance on the Plan
- Groups or populations that should be consciously prioritized for any engagement activities?
 - Vulnerable communities

- Lower income households
- Communities of color
- “Community lifelines” and non-profits – overall, those who work on behalf of or have relationships with the diverse communities and populations in the localities (consider who to contact)
- Objectives? Strategies?
 - Consistent, timely messaging
 - Assess vulnerabilities in communities
 - Ensure eligibility for various funding opportunities
- Activities:
 - Public Education Kick-Off
 - Digital survey – ensure access for communities to Internet; give alternative options for elderly who may not be too technologically savvy (elderly population make up a considerable portion in localities)
 - Hard-copies/in-person capability to complete – could be disseminated through community-based facilities (e.g., libraries)
 - Outline of these resources, consider who/when/where to send these surveys (as these details are to be included within the Plan)
 - Some accommodations may be necessary for those possibly with some disabilities or language barriers
 - Some languages to include could be Chinese, Farsi, Spanish, Pashto/Dari
 - Audible versions
- Public review and comment on current plan;
- In-person event? – may not be achievable due to the strict timeline; consider possibly in July?
- Public review and input on HIRA
- Public Meeting – input on final draft Plan
- National Preparedness Month in September – use to promote the Plan

Grant Administration; Documenting Local In-Kind Match Time

The Project Management Team discussed needs for documenting local in-kind match time, with the Berkley Group and GWRC staff reiterating responsibilities under the grant.

- Reporting likely on a monthly basis, as reimbursements are monthly
- Ensure every employee in the organization working on the Plan is included – large match is expected – lean on PMT for this
- Get information on fringe costs from requisite HR departments

- Total match = \$25,000; Break-down for each locality in BRIC app; cash match is built in as well
- PMT-level of involvement; BG will rely on them to provide updates on local information.
- Sections with locality-specific information should be sent in smaller pieces – section-by-section – only to be sent to most relevant person in the organization.

Next Steps

Discussed short-term follow up; tentative schedule for next meeting (virtual) the week of July 20.