

## **MEETING NOTES**

### **Attendees - Online; Virtual Meeting**

Kate Gibson, Deputy Director, GWRC  
Jacob Hughes, All Hazards Planner, VDEM  
Liz Adams, All Hazards Planner, VDEM  
Griffin Kearns, All Hazards Planner, VDEM  
Jason R. Loftus, Fire-EMS Chief, Caroline County  
Tyler Gelles, Senior Stormwater Manager, City of Fredericksburg  
Jack McGovern, Battalion Chief, City of Fredericksburg  
Steve Lynd, Battalion Chief/Deputy Emergency Manager, King George County  
Monique Dina, Emergency Management Planner, King George County  
Matthew Decatur, Long Range Planner, Spotsylvania County  
Jacob Pastwik, Long Range Planner, Spotsylvania County  
Katie Carpenter, Deputy EM Coordinator, Stafford County  
Matt Good, EM Planner, Stafford County  
Michael Zehner, Environmental Programs Director, The Berkley Group  
Luke Peters, Environmental Planner, The Berkley Group  
Lindsay Edwards, Environmental Planner, The Berkley Group  
Nadya Syazsa, Intern, The Berkley Group

### Not in Attendance

Alexa Boggs, Disaster Response and Recovery Officer, VDEM  
Allyson Finchum, Town Manager, Town of Bowling Green and Town of Port Royal  
Jay Cullinan, Fire Chief, Spotsylvania County  
Roger Sutherland, Assistant Chief, Stafford County  
Colin Noyes, All Hazards Planner, VDEM  
Steven L. Nelson, Director, Emergency Management, Rappahannock Tribe  
Matthew Embrey, Division Chief, EM & Logistics, Spotsylvania County

### **Welcome & Agenda Review**

Michael Zehner opened with welcoming remarks and announced to the group that this fourth meeting was planned to be the final Project Management Team (PMT) meeting, however, due to different needs and expectations of localities

for the review of the draft, that a final PMT meeting to consider approval of the draft would not be held until mid- to late-September.

Mr. Zehner reviewed attendance and the agenda for the meeting.

### **Project Status Update; Review of Tasks & Timelines**

#### *Review of Completed Tasks and Timeline*

Mr. Zehner reviewed the completed tasks and timeline as follows:

- The full Draft Plan is now available on the GWRC Hazard Mitigation website (<https://gwregion.org/environment/hazard-mitigation>)
  - GWRC website updated with press release for public comment and review of the Draft Plan
  - The Public Survey Response Report is also available as an Appendix under the Draft Plan for review
- Localities are asked to publicize the draft plan for public review and comment.
- There will be a 5<sup>th</sup> Project Management Meeting taking place in mid-September with date TBD

#### *Pending Tasks*

Mr. Zehner reviewed pending tasks and activities, as follows:

- With respect to adoption of the Plan and any potential lapse, Mr. Zehner reminded the PMT to keep BRIC and similar grants from FEMA in mind. Mr. Zehner referenced that Stafford had a pending BRIC application, however, in July it was revealed that it was no longer pending. Other localities may apply in the next round of funding, or Stafford may reapply, and it is important to coordinate with VDEM if there is a lapse in the Plan, because waivers may be necessary.
- Mr. Zehner referenced that there was an oversight in the Development Trends sections for each locality contained in Chapter 5, where the population data needs to be updated based on the 2020 Decennial Census data. Mr. Zehner indicated that the Berkley Group would work to update this information.
- Mr. Zehner encouraged the localities to review their respective mitigation strategies and NFIP Survey, and send any changes/corrections to BG for the Final Plan.

## **Review and Discuss Draft Plan; Preliminary Comments**

Chief Lynd posed a question regarding how corrections for the draft Plan should be sent, particularly regarding critical facilities. Mr. Zehner responded that any corrections can be submitted in any way. However, if there are edits from different people at the same organization, it would help to facilitate the revision process to have these edits compiled within one document for BG to review and make changes.

With respect to critical facilities, Chief Lynd asked whether FEMA requires localities to have a full list of critical facilities in the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Chief Lynd is concerned with the critical facilities list being put in the plan as it could potentially endanger the locality due to how much attention this Plan attains from the general public (public reviews and comments, information being spread through social media, accessibility from web search engines such as Google, etc.). Mr. Zehner referred to an earlier correspondence between him and Mr. Hughes regarding this issue, and Mr. Hughes responded that he is currently waiting on FEMA's feedback and guidance on how this issue should be addressed.

Chief Lynd then asked if it would be possible to remove the critical facility list from the Public Draft at this time (should other localities agree) while awaiting FEMA's response. Ms. Gibson asked if withholding this information somehow interferes with FEMA's requirements of having public input on the Plan. Chief McGovern noted that as for the City's critical facilities, the addresses are not included, but rather just the name of the facility itself (e.g., FBI Field Office, University of Mary Washington, etc.). Mr. Hughes advised the best course of action at this time is to probably to wait on FEMA's response before removing the list from current Draft Plan.

Chief McGovern mentioned how in the City of Fredericksburg Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) has a basic version that is publicly available, while the complete entirety of the EOP is more classified. Chief McGovern asked if it would be possible to shield this information in some type of way (e.g., FOIA) because as they are critical facilities they should warrant some protection. Mr. Hughes responded that he is unsure if there are any laws that warrants this protection.

Mr. Hughes referenced some examples of how critical facilities are referenced in other HMPs, namely the plans for the Thomas Jefferson PDC and Hampton Roads PDC.

## **Next Steps**

Mr. Zehner reminded PMT members that comments and reviews on the draft Plan should be sent in the next three weeks before the 5<sup>th</sup> PMT Meeting. Mr. Zehner also asked localities to send examples of their efforts in publicizing the draft Plan for public review and comment (e.g., posting on social media or locality website). Mr. Zehner also noted that the localities may have different requirements for local review of the draft Plan and to let BG know if there are ways for the team to help. Ms. Gibson noted that release of the draft had also been shared with locality CAOs.

The PMT discussed review of the draft and eventual adoption of the Plan further, with Mr. Gelles asking for thoughts from the other localities on how best to expedite approval of the draft. He noted that during the 2017 update period a work session was held, although it may not be the most fitting now. Chief Lynd mentioned that in 2017 a public hearing was held, although for the adoption of the Plan itself, it is brought upon the Board of Supervisors and by staff recommendation, it was approved; though, it was clarified that this process was specifically for final adoption of the Plan, not review of the draft.

Mrs. Carpenter noted that Stafford County already emailed the link of the draft Plan to the executive leadership and department heads, requesting their feedback by September 9 – giving some time to implement the comments and changes before the 5th PMT meeting. Mrs. Carpenter mentioned two (2) department heads have reviewed and gave feedback on the Draft Plan which include minor changes, but they are still waiting for the others' feedback.

Mr. Pastwik indicated that in Spotsylvania, with the adoption of the last plan, they had sought input from the County's public safety committee, and with their support the plan was brought to Board for approval as part of their consent agenda. Mr. Pastwik is still confirming whether their attorney is going to require a public hearing for their Board to adopt vs. endorse the plan. PMT members asked whether there had been any regulatory change that made endorsement no longer valid versus adoption. Mr. Zehner explained the applicable regulations and the feedback that had been received from FEMA, as well as what has been shared with Spotsylvania, which he would also share with the PMT. Mr. Zehner indicated that the clearest action would be local adoption through a resolution, and that the GWRC's adoption of the Plan does not satisfy requirements for local adoption.

Mr. Zehner reiterated that communities have 12 months from FEMA's determination that the Plan is approvable pending local adoption to officially adopt the Plan, and that the effective date of the Plan is based on when the first community adopts the Plan (which sets the 5 year timeline for updating the Plan).

Mr. Zehner announced to the group that for the 5th PMT Meeting, the public would be invited to attend and give their feedback on the Draft Plan. Mr. Zehner indicated that the now 5<sup>th</sup> and anticipated final meeting of the PMT has not yet been scheduled, and would be based on when localities are satisfied that they have reviewed and are able to approve the draft, with or without potential revisions.

Chief McGovern indicated that it would be helpful for the Plan to include copies of the manner of local adoption of the Plan (i.e. resolutions) for future reference and awareness. Mr. Zehner indicated that there is a placeholder in the Plan to reference local adoption, and that copies of adoption resolutions could also be included in the Appendix.

Referring back to the critical facilities issue earlier in the conversation, Mr. Hughes sent picture regarding critical facilities to the PMT illustrating how the HRPDC references critical facilities in their Plan. Mr. Pastwik indicated Spotsylvania County's comprehensive plan also lists many of the public facilities that would be listed in this Plan. However, information of these facilities is kept to a minimum. In addition, Mr. Pastwik noted that these facilities are also mapped in GIS for public access.

To conclude the meeting, Mr. Zehner reminded the PMT to have all revisions, edits, and comments addressed by mid-September, ideally by September 16, and to also confirm when their community is satisfied that their review is complete and that they are able to provide their approval of the Plan.

Mrs. Gibson also announced to the group that GWRC will send a follow up regarding in-kind match reporting.

## **Adjourn**

With no other comments or business, the PMT meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00p.